

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION

PRESENTED BY:	Christian Willenborg, Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee
DATE OF MEETING:	June 12, 2025
SUBJECT:	Annual Report to Council
COUNCIL ACTION:	For Information Only

As custodians of planning and priorities on behalf of University Council, the Planning and Priorities Committee has navigated through an array of subjects, spanning from the continuously changing political landscape, budget and tuition to facility planning and approval of provisional centres. The committee has had collaborative dialogue and provided meaningful feedback as well as asked challenging questions to promote deeper thinking in several areas.

The Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC) met on 15 occasions throughout 2024-25. Additionally, the PPC Centre’s Subcommittee met on 4 occasions. The Chair of PPC also served on the Executive Committee and the Governance Committee.

MEMBERSHIP

Eleven members of the General Academic Assembly, at least six of whom will be elected members of Council, normally one of whom will be Chair. At least one member from the General Academic Assembly with some expertise in financial analysis will be nominated.

Council Members:

Christian Willenborg (Chair)	Agriculture and Bioresources	2026
Angela Lieverse (Vice-Chair)	Arts and Science	2027
Claire Card	WCVM	2026
Jay Kalra	Medicine	2026
Jaswant Singh	WCVM	2027
Rainer Dick	Arts and Science	2025

General Academic Assembly Members:

Volker Gerdtz	WCVM/VIDO	2025
Tim Hutchinson	Library	2025
Kerry Mansell	Pharmacy and Nutrition	2027
Alexey Shevyakov	Arts and Science	2027
Venkatesh Meda	Engineering	2027

Dean:

Brooke Milne	Arts and Science	2027
--------------	------------------	------

Student Members:

Lindsay Gray Carlson	GSA (VP Finance & Operations)
Moses Ahiabu	USSU (VP Operations & Finance)

Ex-Officio:

Vince Bruni-Bossio	Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic
Terry Fonstad	Designate for VP Research
Greg Fowler	Vice-President, Administration & Chief Operating Officer
Angela Jaime	Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement
Vicki Squires (non-voting)	University Council Chair
Dee Henne (non-voting)	Chief Financial Officer

Resource Members:

Patti McDougall	Deputy Provost
-----------------	----------------

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

- 1) Recommending and reporting to Council on university wide planning and priorities initiatives and review activities in consultation with the President and Senior Administration.
- 2) Undertaking the review and recommending to Council on:
 - (a) Academic plans & priorities for the university including teaching, learning and research, scholarly and artistic works.
 - (b) Community engagement plans & priorities.
 - (c) Matters referred to it from other committees.

- (d) Establishment and disestablishment (including through amalgamation or separation) of any college, school, department, or any unit responsible for the administration of an academic program, with the advice of relevant committees of Council.
 - (e) Establishment and disestablishment (including through amalgamation or separation) or review of any institute or centre at the university.
 - (f) Affiliation or federation with other educational institutions, or dissolution of such arrangements, in consultation with relevant committees of Council.
- 3) Review the physical and budgetary plans for the university and make recommendations respecting those matters to the President or Board, such as:
- (a) Main elements of the comprehensive budget.
 - (b) Budgetary implications of government funding requests.
 - (c) Operating and capital budgetary matters, including infrastructure and space allocation issues.
 - (d) Administrative structural changes and reorganizations.

The Planning and Priorities Committee will report to Council on the general nature of the feedback and, where practicable, obtain the guidance of Council. However, the Committee need not disclose to Council matters the disclosure of which would be contrary to the interests of the University.

- 4) Designating individuals to act as representatives of the Committee on any other bodies, when requested, where such representation is deemed by the Committee to be beneficial.
- 5) Balancing academic and fiscal concerns in forming its recommendations.
- 6) Proactively supporting equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging as well as a commitment to transformative decolonization leading to reconciliation in all processes and matters coming before the Committee.

COUNCIL ITEMS

PPC presented the following items to University Council:

- Provisional Centre for Bioproduct Development and Commercialization
- Provisional Centre for Canadian Sustainable Digital Agriculture
- Disestablishment of the Confucius Institute
- ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan: Indigenous Strategy Update
- Composting and Pedestrian Safety Updates
- 2024/2025 Enrolment Report

STRATEGIC, INTEGRATED and FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Planning and Priorities Committee received presentations and provided feedback on the following university-level initiatives and plans.

Budgeting and Tuition and Fees for 2025-2026

Planning and Priorities was actively engaged in discussion around university finances and the budgeting process. Members were provided with an opportunity to review the approved 2025-2026 Tuition Rates and Student Fees as well as a briefing on the 2025-2026 Comprehensive Budget.

The committee was appreciative to hear of the extensive consultation process from the Provost's Office regarding tuition and student fees. In addition, there was a great amount of transparency and consultation on the budget discussions where it was noted that the documentation and conversations surrounding the 2025-2026 Budget were the most comprehensive the committee has seen in several years.

Vice-President Portfolio Priorities

The Planning and Priorities Committee invited all the Vice-President's to outline their priorities for the year. The Vice-President portfolio priorities encompass a variety of objectives enhancing various aspects of the institution which are important for PPC to understand to ensure decisions made are aligning with these priorities. These priorities include but are not limited to academic excellence, student success, research, community engagement, and financial sustainability.

Integrated Services Renewal Initiative (ISR) and Administrative Service Review Initiative (ASR)

Planning and Priorities received updates on both the ISR and ASR initiatives. The focus for ISR is to move to a cloud-based enterprise system where the Government would like to see a sector wide approach to this project. As for ASR, progress has been made where administrative professionals in colleges are reporting up to a central leader, creating a network of professionals to work together. PPC will continue to receive updates on these projects as they unfold.

AI Principles and Guidelines

Work is continuing to move forward on working with Artificial Intelligence (AI). Nancy Turner, Interim Associate Provost, Teaching Innovation & Strategic Initiatives provided members with updates on two separate occasions. The first presentation outlined the Principles and Guidelines created from the work of the AI Task Force. The second

presentation focused on Ethical and Responsible Use of AI at USask. PPC members were asked to provide feedback on how to advance this work and how to best engage University Council.

International Students

Planning and Priorities had many conversations surrounding the impacts of the IRCC changes on international students and the effects these changes are having across Canada and USask. The Provosts Office provided members with updates on PALs issued and accepted, as well as strategies surrounding the loss of diversity in our student body.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic Update

In light of the future united campuses, members were informed of a project aimed at exploring academic collaborations with Saskatchewan Polytechnic and identifying best practices to guide future partnerships. Phase 1 of the project is focused on academic collaborations, recognizing that strong partnerships are essential for advancing research. A standardized template is being developed to gather data from colleges across campus to map existing collaborations. The project also involves identifying key enablers and drivers of successful partnerships, examining space and infrastructure needs—including possibilities for shared labs and classrooms.

In addition, the following other topics were a part of PPC's conversations:

- [Strategic Enrolment Management](#)
- [Health Science Reorganization](#)
- [Sustainability Strategy Update](#)
- Campaign Updates
- UniForum
- Capital Priorities
- Demolition of Buildings on Seminary Crescent
- USask Land and Real Estate Strategy

PPC CENTRES SUBCOMMITTEE

Membership on this subcommittee is as follows:

- Vice chair of the Planning and Priorities Committee to serve as chair of the subcommittee.
- Two additional members from the Planning and Priorities Committee.
- One member from the Academic Programs Committee.
- One member from the Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work Committee.
- Five centre directors.
- One representative of the Office of the Provost.
- One representative of the Office of the Vice-President Research.

Terms of centre directors on the subcommittee are for three years, rotating to ensure continuity of membership. Terms of the representatives of Council committees align with their terms on those committees. Quorum of the subcommittee is a majority of voting members.

The PPC Centre's subcommittee has continued to advance its work from the previous year in addition to reviewing new and old centres. A summary of their work includes:

- Changes to the Terms of Reference to clarify membership and responsibilities within the Planning and Priorities Committee.
- Brought forward two centres for Provisional Status.
- Brought forward the termination of one centre that is no longer in operation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank my Vice-Chair, Angela Lieveise, and all the members of PPC who made time to read the supporting documentation and provided the biweekly meetings of the PPC with insightful and thoughtful conversations.

I want to thank the PPC Executive for finding the additional hour in their busy schedules to meet and plan for agenda items that, in several cases, were challenged by internal and/or external deadlines. Thank you to Angela for chairing the PPC centers subcommittee meetings and for Jordan Sherbino for supporting the subcommittee. I also wish to thank Danielle Rudulier for her support of the PPC committee and finally, I thank all of the outgoing members of PPC and wish them the very best.

Respectfully,
Christian Willenborg, Chair, Planning and Priorities