

MINUTES

University Council

Date: May 14, 2026

Time: 2:30–4:30 pm

Location: Convocation Hall (PMB 120) and Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 2:32 pm.

The Chair, Dr. Vicki Squires, began with a Land Acknowledgement.

No members of the media identified themselves.

The Chair reminded members there are no unauthorized recordings of Council meetings.

1. Tribute

A tribute took place for Professor Gordon Zello from the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, presented by Jane Alcorn, Dean, College of Pharmacy and Nutrition.

2. Agenda

Motion: (Jones/Augusta): That the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Chair's Opening Remarks

Dr. Squires welcomed members and highlighted the recent widespread cyberattack on the Canvas learning platform reminding members that universities are vulnerable and the need for continued diligence in the online environment. The Chair emphasized the critical governance role of University Council, thanking members for their significant behind-the-scenes work in committees and welcomed Ralph Deters as the incoming chair starting July 2026.

4. Minutes

Motion: (Sarjeant-Jenkins/Walsworth): That the minutes of April 16, 2026 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

Abstention: Compton

5. Business Arising

A follow up to a question brought forward from March Council was addressed.

Does USask have a consistent, proactive framework for communicating the full scope of what students lose at the point of graduation — and a plan for helping them transition to alternatives? If so, how can that framework be made more visible, so that future policy changes don't arrive as surprises

Dr. Marjorie Delbaere, Interim Vice-Provost Students and Learning explained that the university is implementing an automated, multi-stage communication plan developed collaboratively across campus—to provide graduating students with timely information and resources (such as email migration, ORCID ID setup, and continued service access) to support their transition after losing institutional email access, while also exploring additional supports for those needing longer-term academic continuity.

6. Academic Programs Committee

Paul Jones, Chair of the Academic Programs Committee, presented the committee’s items as outlined in the agenda package.

6.1. Request for Decision: Master of Business Administration Admission Qualification Changes

The full report is in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

Motion: (Jones/Vandenberg): It is recommended by the Academic Programs Committee that Council approve the admission qualification changes to the Master of Business Administration program effective for the 2028-2029 application cycle.

CARRIED

Abstention: Compton

6.2. Item for Information: Revisions to Bachelor of Science in Dental Therapy from Senate Education Committee

The full report is in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

7. Governance Committee

Susan Detmer, Chair of the Governance Committee, presented the committee’s items as outlined in the agenda package.

7.1. Request for Decision: University Council Rules of Order

The full report is in the agenda package.

Chair Susan Detmer, presented a motion to amend the University Council’s rules of order by replacing the current Kerr and King procedures with the Standard Code. The motion had been brought forward as a notice in March. Since that notice, consultation including an open forum for members and responses to email questions provided more information.

The main question raised during consultation concerned whether faculty councils would be required to adopt the new rules of order. It was clarified that adoption would be at the discretion of each faculty council; they may choose to align with the new Standard Code or retain their existing procedures. Faculty Councils will be contacted to see if those that currently use Kerr and King wish to switch, and the Governance Office is prepared to provide support in this process

Chair Detmer summarized that the Standard Code was selected after extensive review due to its clearer language, flexibility, and better accommodation of modern practices such as virtual and hybrid meetings, compared to limitations and ambiguities in the existing rules. Questions from members focused on consultation, transparency, evidentiary support, accessibility, and inclusion of Indigenous governance

perspectives. Concerns were raised that council members had not had sufficient time or access to a full record of analysis prior to the meeting. In response, the committee outlined past procedural challenges under Kerr and King—particularly around voting and hybrid participation, emphasizing the need for updated guidance.

A motion was then introduced by a member to defer the decision and refer it back to the Governance Committee for further review, including more comprehensive evidence-based data with potential external research support. Debate on this procedural motion was limited, though some clarification and additional context regarding the rationale for change was permitted by Chair Squires.

The Governance Committee committed to reviewing the rules of order change annually with other bylaw reviews, ensuring the Standard Code is meeting the needs of Council.

Concerns were also expressed about the lack of a formal mechanism for ongoing discussion between notice and decision stages.

The member indicated a willingness to withdraw their motion if improved consultation mechanisms were established. Chair Squires explained that this type of commitment could not be formally guaranteed, and the motion to defer proceeded to a vote.

Motion (Bradford/Card): That the motion proposed in 7.1 be referred back to the Governance Committee.

DEFEATED

Council then voted on the original motion to adopt the new rules of order.

Motion: (Detmer/ Sarjeant-Jenkins): It is recommended by the Governance Committee to amend the Council Bylaws and Regulations such that the most recent edition of the American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure replaces Procedures for Meetings and Organizations, Third Edition by Kerr and King as the parliamentary authority and that various other consequential amendments be made as described in this report, effective July 1, 2026.

CARRIED

Abstention: Compton

7.2 Request for Decision: Western College of Veterinary Medicine Faculty Council Bylaws

The full report is in the agenda package.

There were no questions at this time.

Motion: (Jones/ Sarjeant-Jenkins): It is recommended by the Governance Committee that Council approve the Western College of Veterinary Medicine Faculty Council Bylaws, effective immediately.

CARRIED

Abstentions: Compton and Hunter

7.3 Notice of Motion: Amendments to the Academic Programs Committee Terms of Reference

The full report is in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

7.4 Notice of Motion: Amendments to the Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee Terms of Reference

The full report is in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

8. Planning and Priorities Committee

Dr. Christian Willenborg, Chair of PPC, presented the committee's item as outlined in the agenda package.

8.1 Item for Information: Revisions to Access to Information and Privacy Policy

The full report is in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

9. Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee

Dr. Eric Lamb, Chair of the RSAW Committee, presented the committee's items as outlined in the agenda package.

9.1 Request for Decision: Care and Use of Animals in Science at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) Policy

The full report is in the agenda package.

A member expressed support for the proposed change while highlighting broader ethical and practical tensions related to animal care policies. The member emphasized the importance of fostering a "culture of care" on campus but noted that external frameworks, such as those from the Canadian Council on Animal Care, which prioritize reducing, refining, and replacing animal use, can create challenges for disciplines like veterinary medicine. The member explained that these requirements can impose significant administrative burdens, even for activities that may benefit animal welfare and the human-animal bond. The member also pointed out inconsistencies in how animals are treated on campus, citing examples such as pest control practices that would not meet institutional research standards. The member concluded by raising awareness of the growing pressure toward eliminating animal use altogether and the resulting difficulties for programs that rely on animals for teaching, research, and therapeutic purposes. Chair Squires acknowledged these concerns as an awareness item and Chair Lamb appreciated the identified inconsistencies.

Motion (Lamb/Jones): It is recommended by the Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee that Council approve the revised Care and Use of Animals in Science Policy effective July 1, 2026.

CARRIED

Abstentions: Vandenberg, Compton, Dobson, Marche, Ruzzini

9.2 Item for Information: Device Security and Research Travel Security

The full report is in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

10. Joint Committee on Chairs and Professorships

Dr. Scott Walsworth, Chair of JCCP, presented the committee's items as outlined in the agenda package.

10.1 Request for Decision: Hospitals of Regina Foundation Pediatrics Chair in the Origins of Health and Disease in the College of Medicine

The full report is in the agenda package.

The position is intended to be held by a clinician-scientist who will lead an internationally recognized research program focused on the early-life origins of chronic disease. It was noted that, at the donor's request, the role will be classified as a clinical academic position within the College of Medicine and therefore will fall outside the USFA collective agreement, with compensation provided through the Academic Clinical Funding Program. Additional funding totaling \$2 million over ten years will be contributed by the College of Medicine and the Office of the Vice-President Research to support research and scholarship activities.

While the proposed chair follows standard terms of reference, Council was advised of discussions held at the Joint Committee on Chairs and Professorships (JCCP), where several concerns were raised. These included questions about equity given the comparatively large funding amount relative to other chairs, the rationale for designating the position as out-of-scope and the influence of donor conditions on that classification, and whether sufficient justification had been provided to demonstrate a distinct research gap on campus. Additional concerns related to the absence of explicit references to institutional frameworks such as EDI commitments within the terms of reference. It was emphasized that JCCP discussions reflect both administrative and faculty perspectives.

There were no questions.

Motion (Walsworth/McDougall): It is recommended by the Joint Committee on Chairs and Professorships that University Council and the Board of Governors approve the Hospitals of Regina Foundation Pediatrics Chair in the Origins of Health and Disease in the College of Medicine.

CARRIED

Abstentions: Dobson and Mousseau

10.2 Request for Decision: KPMG Enhancement Chair in Environmental, Social and Governance

The full report is in the agenda package.

This chair is supported by a donation of \$60,000 over three years and is intended primarily as a retention tool to support high-performing faculty who may be at risk of leaving for other institutions. The funding structure allows up to \$15,000 annually to be used as a salary stipend, with the remaining \$5,000 allocated to research support.

Discussions at the Joint Committee on Chairs and Professorships (JCCP) identified several concerns. These included the continued absence of explicit reference in the terms of reference to key institutional frameworks, such as equity, diversity, and inclusion commitments, which was noted as a broader issue with existing templates. Additionally, there were equity-related concerns regarding the use of endowed or donor-funded chairs as retention mechanisms, particularly given that the collective agreement already includes provisions for faculty retention. The committee discussed whether those existing provisions might limit or interact with the use of such additional incentives, highlighting ongoing questions about fairness and consistency in how retention supports are applied across the university.

There were no questions.

Motion (Walsworth/McDougall): It is recommended by the Joint Committee on Chairs and Professorships that University Council and the Board of Governors approve the KPMG Enhancement Chair in Environmental, Social and Governance in the Edwards School of Business.

CARRIED

Abstention: Makarova

11. Reports

11.1. President

President Bruni-Bossio began by noting the search process for a new Provost will begin shortly, with a committee already established and an initial meeting expected within the next two weeks.

President Bruni-Bossio updated members that the university's strategic planning process is advancing, with approximately 3,000 internal participants engaged through campus conversations and surveys, alongside input from around 100 external stakeholders, including donors, industry leaders, and government representatives. Engagement with Indigenous communities is also set to begin over the summer.

Preliminary qualitative analysis of this input indicates emerging themes among faculty and staff related to institutional identity, shared values, a common vision, and balancing local priorities with global impact. Students have emphasized the importance of high-quality academic programming, affordability, campus accessibility, support services, and career preparedness, while external stakeholders have focused on research strength, teaching quality, student experience, and opportunities for deeper engagement.

The next phase of the process will involve advisory tables, where these insights will be refined into more focused strategic priorities. The President highlighted a key tension between internal perspectives, which emphasize institutional culture and operations, and external expectations, which prioritize outcomes such as research excellence and program quality. Addressing this tension will be a critical component of the strategy moving forward. It was also noted that while individual feedback may not appear directly in the final strategy, it is informing the overall direction, and future input from Indigenous communities is expected to further enrich the process.

There were no questions.

11.2. Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic

Interim Provost Patti McDougall addressed the recent global cybersecurity incident affecting Canvas, the university's learning management system, noting that it impacted thousands of institutions worldwide. She expressed appreciation for the rapid response of the university's emergency management team, whose coordinated, cross-functional efforts—led by ICT and involving teaching and learning units—helped ensure continuity and security. Dr. McDougall emphasized the shared responsibility of all community members in maintaining cybersecurity awareness.

Dr. McDougall acknowledged the information item that came forward relating to device and research travel security, indicating that additional efforts would be made to broadly share this guidance across campus through training and communications to support faculty and staff when traveling or handling sensitive information.

There were no questions.

11.3. Graduate Students Association (GSA)

There was no May report- GSA elections will be taking place this upcoming weekend.

11.4. University of Saskatchewan Student's Union (USSU)

USSU President Abtin Safaeian provided his first report to Council as presented in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

12. Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Question Period

Pre-submitted questions:

- 1. I received notice through my Vice-Dean Academic that AES is terminating delivery of AES exams to departments and colleges as of May 1. I could not find any mention of this in the Provost or President's previous reports to Council — yet this affects the teaching-and-learning mission of 500+ faculty and instructors twice a year. Who made this decision? Who recommended this course of action to that decider? When was decision made? What was the supporting analysis/basis for the***

decision? Who among the faculty were consulted, and how was that consultation done? I request a detailed written answer to Council.

With the immediate situation defused, a broader understanding of decision-making processes and transparency can become the larger focus.

In response to the AES exam question, Dr. Delbaere explained that the decision fell within the portfolio of the Interim Vice Provost, Students and Learning, and was prompted by a significant increase in accommodation demands—approximately a 30% rise, with nearly 4,000 exams administered in the previous December alone. Due to limited staffing resources, a proposal was made to discontinue the delivery of completed exams in order to reallocate staff toward administering exams, thereby meeting legal obligations for student accommodations. This proposal was discussed with the Associate Deans' Academic Forum, where concerns about exam security led to additional planning in exam pick up.

Following broader feedback after the decision was made indicating the change would be highly disruptive, the decision was revisited in consultation with the provost, and a temporary reallocation of staff from another unit was implemented. This allowed the continuation of both exam administration and delivery services.

In follow-up, Provost McDougall acknowledged broader concerns about decision-making transparency and the cumulative impact of service changes on faculty. It was recognized that there is heightened sensitivity across the institution to such changes, particularly when they directly affect faculty work. The Provost reiterated a commitment from senior leadership to approach future decisions with greater care and deliberation, emphasizing that while organizational changes are sometimes necessary, there is an increased awareness of the importance of consultation and communication moving forward.

- 2. Summer fieldwork has begun again, and that means I have graduate students and undergrad field assistants with expense claims. Slow processing has been a big problem in past years, particularly an inability to fast-track reimbursements for the less well-paid employees.***

Associate Vice President, People and Chief Human Resources Officer, Marnie Wright responded that the Connection Point team has improved turnaround times, with a current average of nine days—better than the stated target of twelve days. An apology was offered for previous delays, along with reassurance that processing timelines are expected to be more efficient going forward. It was also noted that both Concur and eForm submission methods are handled by the same team, resulting in minimal differences in processing speed; however, eForms may be slightly faster because they tend to be more complete when submitted. The request to prioritize student-related payments during the summer months was acknowledged as a valid consideration and will be explored further. Ongoing efforts to improve payment processes—particularly for student employees—were also highlighted, with a focus on streamlining systems to ensure more timely compensation.

10. Adjournment

Motion (Lieverse): That the meeting be adjourned at 4:09 pm.