



Interim Provost's Report to Council

May 2026

GENERAL REMARKS

As we move through May, the energy on our campuses appears to shift as students and colleagues focus on different activities, which hopefully include opportunities to refresh. There are two items I wish to highlight as part of general remarks this month.

First, some will recall that in November 2021, USask signed the Scarborough Charter, becoming one of the dozens of partner institutions across Canada committed to its principles. Signatories of the Scarborough Charter are committed to redressing anti-Black racism and to fostering Black inclusion in post-secondary institutions, based on four overarching principles: Black flourishing, inclusive excellence, mutuality, and accountability.

The mandate of the Provost's Advisory Committee – Scarborough Charter (PAC-SC) is to provide USask's provost and vice-president academic with advice on priorities and actions stemming from the commitments outlined in the Scarborough Charter. Members of the inaugural PAC-SC have been focusing significant attention on a series of very successful years of programming for Black History Month. We are now re-activating the advisory activity with the PAC-SC continuing to make recommendations on institutional strategies and transformative actionable steps to assist USask in addressing anti-Black racism by critically reviewing policies, processes, and practices.

Membership includes:

- Dr. Loleen Berdahl, Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic
- Dr. George Mutwiri, School of Public Health
- Dr. Jacob Alhassan, College of Medicine
- Dr. Funmi Abioye, College of Law
- Wainwright Noble, Office of the Vice President Research
- Edith Conacher, College of Medicine
- Azul Gonzalez Avila, University of Saskatchewan Students' Union
- Samson Ogala, Pan-African Students Association
- Mandela Alema, Graduate Students' Association

- Lecia Ellis, Black Graduate Students Association of Saskatchewan

Second, tuition for the 2026-27 academic year was announced to current and incoming USask students on April 23. These changes will take effect in Fall 2026. Tuition rate changes vary by program. Undergraduate programs will see domestic and international tuition increases averaging 2.8 per cent, which aligns with [the provincial government's Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Multi Year Operating Fund Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) announced in 2025. For graduate programs, the university has set tuition increases averaging 4.6 per cent for domestic and international students.

Students are our highest priority, and we will work with students to ensure their needs, financial and otherwise, are supported wherever possible. USask provides financial support to promote equitable access for students who are most in need of support to begin or continue their university education. To assist with affordability and accessibility, USask provides \$61 million annually in financial aid, through scholarships, bursaries, tuition waivers and crisis aid. An additional \$1M will be made available for financial crisis aid for those most in need of funding in 2026-27. If you are not already aware, USask has a helpful [financial planning estimator tool](#) that thousands of students have been accessing to assist with their annual planning.

For more information on 2026/27 tuition rates, please visit the [tuition and fees website](#).

USASK UPDATES

RED DRESS DAY

Guided by the words of Elder Mary Lee “face the wind, it brings back memories”—a collaborative installation marked Red Dress Day on May 5 through listening, presence, and remembrance. Decorated brass bells were hung within the red willow bluffs surrounding the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre; their voices carried by the wind as a living memorial. The bells were created through open community workshops, where all were welcome to gather, create, learn, and remember together. Each bell holds space for story, grief, honour, and resilience. The bells will remain in the willows until early June, sounding with the wind, before being respectfully taken down and stored until next year. All are invited to sit for a moment, listen, pay your respects, and reflect on the lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people. This installation honours those voices, heard and unheard, and asks us to remain present, accountable, and connected. [More information.](#)

PRINCIPAL, PRINCE ALBERT CAMPUS

Dr. Jay Wilson has been extended to serve an additional two-year term as principal of the University of Saskatchewan Prince Albert campus, from Aug. 1, 2026 to July 31, 2028.

A long-standing member of the USask community, Dr. Wilson has served the university for more than 30 years as an educator, researcher, and academic leader. Since his initial appointment as principal in 2024, the Prince Albert campus has experienced significant growth, including increased enrolment, expanded program offerings, and strengthened community-based teaching and service initiatives. Notable developments include new commerce course offerings, growth in nursing and dental therapy programs, and expanded clinical placements supporting both students and the community. Through strong local engagement and collaborative leadership, Dr. Wilson has helped position the Prince Albert campus for continued success. Please join us in congratulating him on this extension.

COLLEGE UPDATES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES

A selection of recent accomplishments, achievements and milestones for USask's college and school community are shared below.

USSU TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The University of Saskatchewan Undergraduate Students' Union (USSU) facilitates a voting process to select the recipients of Teaching Excellence Awards each academic year. Selected by students, the USSU Teaching Excellence Awards recognize those who have demonstrated enthusiasm, organization, and fairness in evaluation, providing exceptional commitment and support to their classrooms. Congratulations to this year's recipients: Dr. Alec Aitken (PhD), Dr. Caroline Arbuckle (PhD), Dr. Gabriel Dalio Bernardes (PhD), Dr. Jason Bowey (PhD), Dr. Diana Heney (PhD), Dr. Martin Kohlberger (PhD), Dr. John Moffatt (PhD), Dr. Scott Napper (PhD), Michelle Patterson (RN), and Dr. Bunyamin Tar'an (PhD). Your dedication and passion for teaching are having a true impact on students.

YWCA WOMEN OF DISTINCTION AWARDS

We are proud to congratulate members of the USask community who have been named nominees for the 2026 YWCA Saskatoon Women of Distinction Awards in various categories. Their leadership, scholarship, and community impact reflect the very best of USask. Congratulations to all award nominees on this well-deserved recognition.

STEM: Dr. Linda Chelico (PhD), Dr. Corinne Schuster-Wallace (PhD), Dr. Azita Haddadi (PharmD)

Education: Dr. Vallerie Gordon (MD)

Health and Wellness: Dr. Charissa Pockett (MD)

Community Building: Florence Kurai Mudzongo

NEW FOUNDATIONAL PATHWAYS IN ARTS AND SCIENCE CERTIFICATE

The College of Arts and Science is introducing a new certificate program that will open possibilities for university students. The [Foundational Pathways in Arts and Science certificate](#) is designed to capture the course areas that are needed for all Arts and Science programs while setting students up for success if they continue into a degree program. The certificate will allow students who have successfully completed 24-credit units to receive a credential in return for their effort, whether they choose to go onto pursue additional studies, like a degree program, or other interests.

NEW FLEXIBLE-LEARNING ENGINEERING CLASSROOM MARKS MAJOR MILESTONE

The newly renovated classroom in the College of Engineering, 2B04, marks a major milestone in USask Engineering's Innovation, Design, Engineering and Applied Science project, which includes both strategic renovations and a future expansion to the engineering building. It is the college's first significant renovation since 2002 and the addition of the chemical engineering wing. Supported by funding from the Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, alumni donors and a legacy gift from the William Martin Backlund Estate, the space is now home to a 124-seat classroom that is designed for flexibility and collaboration.

STUDENT-LED GALA HIGHLIGHTS CAMPUS INCLUSIVITY

In March, the Edwards Queer Student Society hosted its fourth annual gala at Louis' Loft, bringing together students, faculty and members of the business community to recognize and celebrate 2SLGBTQIA+ voices and allies. Centered on the theme Resiliency Stronger, Braver, Prouder, the event provided opportunities for networking, reflection and learning through dinner, student engagement and keynote remarks. The gala featured keynote speakers Carissa McNaught and Alana Rabby Dowling of You Therapies YXE, who shared insights from their work building an inclusive, community-focused psychotherapy practice in Saskatoon. The event highlighted student leadership, inclusion and the importance of creating spaces that support belonging and resilience across the university community.

ENACTUS UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN REGIONAL COMPETITION RESULTS

Enactus University of Saskatchewan participated in the Enactus Canada Regional Exposition, held March 12 and 13 in Vancouver, British Columbia, and earned second place

in the TD Entrepreneurship Challenge for its Build-A-Business project, a four-week entrepreneurship program designed to support individuals with intellectual disabilities. The team also demonstrated impact through projects including Re-Colour, which diverts used crayons from landfills through upcycling, and Giving FWRd, a food waste reduction initiative that transforms surplus food into ready-to-eat meals for community members in need. The achievements highlight student leadership, social innovation, and the application of entrepreneurial learning to address community challenges. Congratulations to Enactus University of Saskatchewan on this accomplishment.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THROUGH COMMUNITY-ENGAGED TAX PREPARATION

During the 2026 tax season, the Edwards School of Business delivered its Volunteer Tax Prep Program in partnership with Sask Housing and SaskAbilities, hosting seven community tax clinics and filing 142 personal tax returns for community members living in senior residences and individuals supported by SaskAbilities, doubling both the number of clinics offered and the total returns prepared compared to the previous year. The program engaged 44 student volunteers, supported by 11 faculty and staff volunteers and 15 local CPA reviewers, with generous support from CPA Saskatchewan. Delivered through COMM 407 – Corporate Tax, Non-Income Taxes and Tax Planning for Taxpayers, the initiative provided students with hands on experience in personal tax preparation and client interaction while making a meaningful contribution to community service. Thank you to the faculty, staff and students who make this program possible.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDENT COLLABORATION IN GAME DESIGN AND MARKETING

In April, students from the Edwards School of Business and the USask Department of Computer Science showcased their work at a Student Game Jam Showcase, the capstone event of an interdisciplinary collaboration between COMM 498 – Strategic Video Game Marketing, taught by Ben Dunning, and CMPT 406 – Game Design Workshop, coordinated by Jason Bowey. Since late January, students worked together in studio lab teams to develop and promote four original, student-built video games. The public showcase featured booth-style demos where attendees could play the games, view marketing materials, and engage directly with student developers and marketers. The collaboration highlighted experiential, cross-disciplinary learning and the value of coordinated course design across academic units.

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Yin Liu has been reappointed as Head, Department of English, College of Arts and Science, for a one-year term, beginning July 1, 2026 up to June 30, 2027.

Dr. Camille Burnett has been appointed as Vice-Dean, Research (Clinical, Health Sciences & Population Health), College of Medicine, for a term up to 5 years, beginning July 1, 2026 up to June 30, 2031.

Dr. Leah Ferguson has been appointed as Associate Dean, Research, College of Kinesiology, for a term up to 5 years, beginning July 1, 2026 up to June 30, 2031.

Dr. Craig Wilson has been extended as acting Associate Dean, Research, Graduate Programs and Faculty Relations, Edwards School of Business, for a term of up to one year, beginning July 1, 2026 and up to June 30, 2027.

Brooke Klassen has been appointed as acting Associate Dean, Academic, Edwards School of Business, for a one-year term, beginning July 1, 2026 up to June 30, 2027.

Shannon Forrester has been appointed as acting Associate Dean, Academic, College of Kinesiology beginning July 1, 2026 up to December 31, 2026.

Dr. Jay Wilson has been extended as Principal, USask Prince Albert Campus, beginning August 1, 2026, up to July 21, 2028.

ACTIVE SEARCHES AND REVIEWS

Searches:

- Dean, College of Pharmacy and Nutrition
- Dean, College of Law
Executive Director, Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy

Please see [here](#) for information on searches and reviews.