UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Interim Provost's Report to Council

October 2026

GENERAL REMARKS

Student Systems Modernization project

USask is assessing its current student digital ecosystem to support future academic, student service, and operational needs. Huron Consulting Group has been engaged to evaluate the current student information ecosystem and develop a modernization strategy and roadmap. During the working process, input from the USask community will help identify strengths, challenges, emerging needs, and opportunities for improvement. This project is focused on technology and processes and is part of phase one of the larger Integrated Services Renewal (ISR) Initiative to modernize and replace aging core administrative systems that support students, employees, finance, and procurement. We will provide regular updates on how this work is progressing and opportunities for input over the coming months.

Diplomatic Economic Mission to Saskatchewan

In early October, we had the opportunity to welcome an international diplomatic mission to Saskatchewan, and to share with them what makes USask a leader in academics, research, and student experience in Canada and the world. This delegation included representatives from the Government of Saskatchewan, Global Affairs Canada, and Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and equivalent representatives from countries across Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Asia. I want to thank all here today for the work that you do that makes it possible to represent USask so wonderfully on the global stage.

USASK UPDATES

ACTING DEAN, WESTERN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Due to a planned six-month administrative leave for Dr. Gillian Muir from January 1 to June 30, 2027, the USask Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) has appointed Dr. Stephen Manning as acting dean, effective January 1, 2027. A long-serving member of the WCVM community, Dr. Manning has held a range of academic, clinical, and leadership roles

over more than two decades and currently leads operations of the Veterinary Medical Centre while supporting senior clinical training in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program. With extensive expertise in veterinary medicine, reproductive health, teaching, and clinical practice, Dr. Manning is well positioned to provide stable leadership and maintain momentum on the college's priorities during this period, ensuring continued excellence in veterinary education, research, and community service. We wish the best to Dr. Muir during her administrative leave, and warmly welcome Dr. Manning into the role of acting dean during this time.

WEEK OF REFLECTION

The Week of Reflection at USask was observed the last week of September, leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30, allowing the USask community time to focus on their personal learning of reconciliation. USask efforts were led by the team in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement (OVPIE) with many others across campus getting involved. Students, staff, and faculty had an opportunity on September 30 and throughout the week to wear an orange shirt to honour residential school survivors, and to connect with others during Saskatchewan **community-based events.** A USask-made art installation was also featured during the week. The **Blanket Project** was designed to acknowledge the unmarked graves that were found across Turtle Island, honouring the spirits of those who were missing.

We are reminded during the Week of Reflection and throughout the academic year that this work requires the continued dedication and commitment of everyone on all USask campuses. In August 2026, we marked five years since USask received the gift of the Indigenous Strategy, and leaders from across campus have shared reports that highlight their unit's achievements and underline their challenges. As we continue on this journey together into the future, all USask students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to review the **22 reports** available on the OVPIE website, **indigenous.usask.ca.**

UNIVERSITY RANKINGS SUCCESSES

ShanghaiRanking Global Ranking of Academic Subjects

USask achieved a major international milestone in 2026, ranking ninth globally and first in Canada for Water Resources in the Shanghai Ranking Global Ranking of Academic Subjects (GRAS), reflecting the university's world-leading research and scholarship in water science. The ranking also highlighted broader research excellence across the institution, with USask improving its standing in several disciplines, including Medical Technology, Chemistry, Education, and Nursing, with Nursing advancing into the 201–300 tier after being unranked

the previous year. Evaluating approximately 2,000 universities worldwide, the GRAS recognizes research impact, faculty achievements, international collaboration, and scholarly output, underscoring USask's growing global reputation as a leader in research and education.

Times Higher Education World University Rankings

USask has achieved its highest-ever placement in the 2027 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, which evaluates universities based on their primary activities of teaching, research, knowledge transfer, and international outlook. USask ranked in the 351-375 tier among nearly 2,300 universities worldwide. This is the university's strongest performance in the rankings to date and coincides with the largest number of participating institutions ever included.

USASK OPEN HOUSE 2026

USask Open House 2026 took place on September 25 and attracted more than 2,700 attendees from a total of 3,671 registrants, including 2,234 students, 426 parents/supporters, and 28 high school counsellors. Attendance was comparable to last year. Check-in and welcome activities in the Physical Activity Complex ran smoothly.

Highlights included:

- **10 information fair booths** showcasing student services and resources
- **17 campus tours** offered throughout the day
- **44 admission decisions** made through Apply on the Spot sessions, with approximately **36 admission letters** distributed during the event
- Participation from **14 colleges**, participated or were represented through hosting or attendance at expos and running their own activities, including the Colleges of Agriculture and Bioresources, Arts and Science, Dentistry, Education, Edwards School of Business, Engineering, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Kinesiology, Law, Medicine and the School of Rehabilitation Science, Nursing, Pharmacy and Nutrition, the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, and St. Thomas More College.
- Representation from **eight student service units** across the university showcased the university's network of student and academic resources through the Student Services Info Fair, including Access and Equity Services, Career Services, the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre, International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC), Residence, Student Finance and Awards, Student Recruitment, and Student Wellness and Peer Health.

AI READY RESEARCHER SERIES

The AI Ready Researcher Series, offered by the USask Library, has generated exceptional interest from the research community, with all four sessions now full. Designed to help create an environment that supports AI-ready research, the series brings researchers together in conversation and experimentation to explore both the opportunities and risks of using generative AI in research, scholarship, and artistic work. Through facilitated discussions and hands-on learning with approved AI tools, participants are examining responsible, transparent, and ethical approaches that prioritize research integrity, quality, and scholarly rigor. The strong demand for the series highlights the University Library's important role in supporting research success across campus and its leadership in helping researchers confidently navigate emerging technologies and evolving research practices. Session presenters include expertise from the Office of the Vice-President Research, the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning, and the USask Library, with Trevor Batters, Kurt Bergsma, Catherine Boden, and Ann Liang.

COLLEGE AND SCHOOL UPDATES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES

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

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY ABROAD COURSE COLLABORATION

The USask College of Education and College of Agriculture and Bioresources are advancing their commitment to experiential and globally engaged learning through their first interdisciplinary study abroad program, bringing together students and faculty for a 10-day field course in Guatemala. The innovative program explored the intersections of agriculture, sustainability, culture, history, and citizenship, providing students with hands-on learning experiences and cross-disciplinary perspectives while strengthening international partnerships. The initiative was recognized with a Regional Centres of Expertise (RCE) Saskatchewan award for fostering cross-cultural understanding and community engagement, and supports USask's broader goals of sustainability, global learning, and integrating Indigenous and local knowledge into educational and agricultural practices.

EDWARDS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS UPDATES

Edwards supply chain management major reaccredited by Supply Chain Canada

The Edwards School of Business is pleased to share that the Bachelor of Commerce (B.Comm.) supply chain management major has been reaccredited by Supply Chain

Canada. This continued accreditation reflects the program's alignment with national standards and its role in preparing students for careers in Canada's supply chain profession. Graduates of the Edwards BComm program who have achieved a grade of 70 per cent or higher in designated courses within the last five years may receive advanced standing towards the Supply Chain Management Professional (SCMP™) Designation.

120 young entrepreneurs participate in fifth annual Edwards Entrepreneurship Summer Youth Camp

The fifth annual Edwards Entrepreneurship Summer Youth Camp welcomed 120 campers aged 9 to 14 over three weeks of hands-on experiential learning. Participants explored key business concepts including entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, budgeting, and sales while developing their own business ideas from concept to market. Throughout the program, campers engaged with local entrepreneurs, created business plans and budgets, developed products and services, and refined their pitches in preparation for the Friday Business Fair. The camp showcased the creativity and innovation of young entrepreneurs, with participants presenting a diverse range of ventures, from interactive experiences to handmade and manufactured products.

CPA Saskatchewan partnership supports accounting student development

The Edwards Accounting Bootcamp helps students build the knowledge, confidence, and professional connections needed to succeed in upper-year accounting studies and prepare for careers in the profession. Led by associate professor Brandy Mackintosh, the program is offered at the beginning of both the Spring and Fall terms and provides a comprehensive review of key accounting concepts, technical skills, and learning strategies that support success in COMM 321 Corporate Financial Reporting I and subsequent accounting courses. Students also gain insight into career pathways and professional designation opportunities through engagement with faculty, alumni, guest speakers, and industry professionals. By combining academic preparation with professional development and networking opportunities, the bootcamp strengthens students' readiness for both the classroom and the workplace. Made possible through the generous support of CPA Saskatchewan, the initiative has benefited more than 240 undergraduate students since its launch in 2024.

LAUNCH OF DENTPRENEUR PROGRAM

A new College of Dentistry initiative is giving undergraduate students the opportunity to turn real oral health challenges into innovative solutions. Launched in early September, Dentpreneur is a free extracurricular initiative designed for students who want to gain hands-on experience in innovation and entrepreneurship while working collaboratively on

meaningful problems. Dentpreneur unfolds in three phases, allowing students to progress from introductory learning to developing and pitching an idea with an interdisciplinary team. Participants will receive a certificate for each phase of Dentpreneur they complete, providing recognition of their extracurricular learning and participation. This interdisciplinary venture brings together undergraduate students from the College of Dentistry, College of Arts and Science, College of Engineering and Edwards School of Business.

COLLEGE OF LAW UPDATES

The College of Law held its annual First-Year Welcoming Ceremony on September 22. At this event, attended by family, friends, alumni, faculty, and the judiciary, 124 members of the Class of 2029 officially became part of the USask Law community. The ceremony included recitation of the student and faculty commitments, adapted from the USask Learning Charter.

The college has also launched its new land-based learning class with 13 students. The name, sonî askiy nipîy pimâtisiwin (LAW 498.3), includes pimâtisiwin (life, being alive and good clean living with high moral standards); sonî (along the riverside/riverbank); askiy (Land/Earth/World); and nipîy (water). This course forms a key part of the College of Law response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Call to Action #28, which calls upon all law school in Canada to require law students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law.

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Som Niyoogi has been appointed as Interim Associate Dean, Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work (RSAW), College of Arts and Science, beginning September 15, 2026, up to December 31, 2027.

Sarah Buhler has been appointed as Interim Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, College of Law, beginning October 1, 2026, up to June 30, 2027.

Dr. Soo Kim has been appointed as Acting Director, School of Rehabilitation Science, College of Medicine, beginning October 1, 2026, up to March 31, 2027.

Dr. Wanda Martin has been appointed as Acting Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and Research, College of Nursing, beginning January 4, 2027, up to June 30, 2027.

ACTIVE SEARCHES AND REVIEWS

Searches:

- Dean, College of Pharmacy and Nutrition

Please see here for information on searches and reviews.