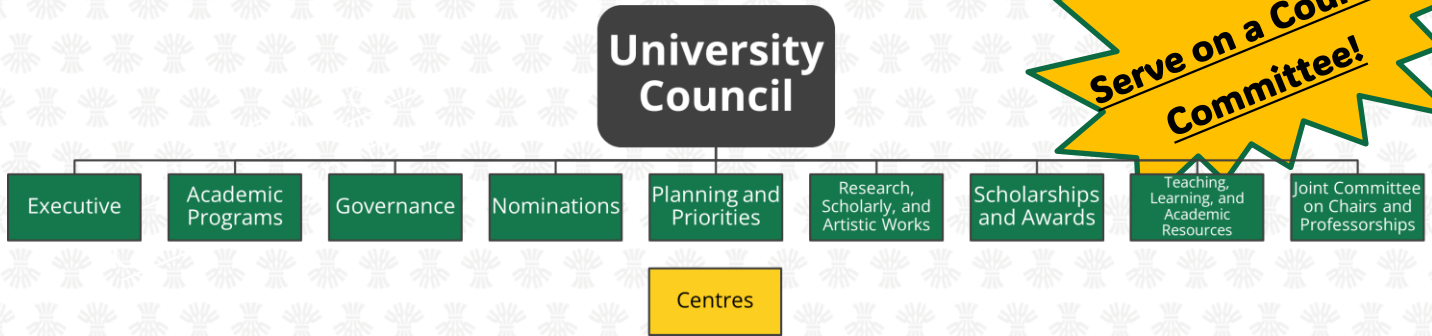


# USASK COUNCIL GAZETTE

Volume III, No. 2

April 16, 2026

## Governance: Not Glamourous, Very Important Rules, Decision, Impact- You In?



## April is All About That Governance Groove

Four governing bodies meet in one month!

Annual **GAA Meeting**  
took place on  
April 2, 2026



**Board of Governors**  
meets on  
April 21 & 22, 2026



**Senate**  
Meets on  
April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026

### Inside this Issue:

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	2
NOMINATIONS	3
SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS	3
TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ACADEMIC RESOURCE	4
RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND ARTISTIC WORK	6
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES	7
GOVERNANCE	8
JUST FOR FUN	9



Photo Credit: USask Bynder

**BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS**

The USask Council Gazette was established in the Spring of 2024 as a way to be more transparent and communicate back to members on 'what's happening' at the various Committees of Council. We achieve good governance through accountability, transparency, and participation.

# Academic Programs Committee

Along with its regular work reviewing new programs, admissions updates, and program changes, the Academic Programs Committee (APC) has been diving into some bigger-picture conversations too.

## Academic Program Review (APR)

APC took a look at the Academic Program Review process, which checks in on all undergraduate and graduate programs with a focus on growth and improvement (not rankings). Members noted that in-person reviews are especially helpful for seeing how students and staff are experiencing programs—and for sparking fresh ideas. There was also some discussion about timing, follow-up, and whether programs needing extra support might benefit from shorter review cycles.

## Academic Courses Policy

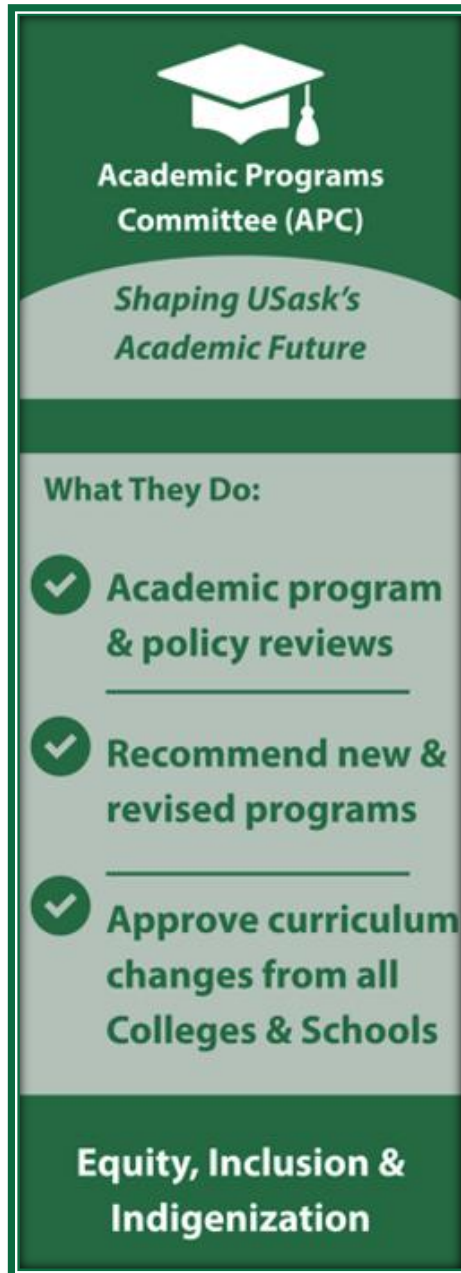
The committee was involved at several points in the recent updates to the Assessment and Course Delivery Policies and Procedures. With approval now in place, APC will help support the rollout and implementation over the coming months.

## Enrolment Planning

APC received an update on the Strategic Enrolment Management Planning process, with plenty of emphasis on coordination across colleges and keeping a close eye on first-year retention.

## CASPer and Admissions

APC also discussed the use of CASPer



testing in admissions for some professional programs. Members compared how it's used across colleges and raised thoughtful questions about cost, transparency, potential bias, and how well it predicts student success. More on this topic will come back to Council in May.

Chair Paul Jones would also like to acknowledge the great work taking place in the Academic Programs Support Team (Governance Office, SFO/Provost and Registrar's Office) for streamlining the program review packages. The efforts over the past two years of a process improvement project has made a significant difference in the way the committee operates.



*For questions on APC, connect with Danielle  
at [danielle.rudulier@usask.ca](mailto:danielle.rudulier@usask.ca),  
APC Coordinator.*

# Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee has been especially busy this year—and true to form, they are the team that keeps everything (and everyone) moving. Since November, they've played a key role in populating several major search committees, including those for the Dean of Law, Dean of Pharmacy and Nutrition, and Associate Vice-President Research.

This behind-the-scenes work is essential to keeping leadership transitions on track. With those searches now underway, the committee is shifting its focus to assembling the Committees of Council, ensuring the right mix of voices and expertise around the table.

*For questions on Nominations, connect with Danny at [danny.freire@usask.ca](mailto:danny.freire@usask.ca)  
Nominations Committee Coordinator.*

**Nominations Committee**  
*Connecting People to University Governance*

**What They Do:**

- Nominate council committee members
- Select council committee chairs
- Nominate appeal and review committee members

**Balanced Representation**

**Scholarships and Awards Committee**  
*Recognizing Excellence & Supporting Student Success*

**What They Do:**

- Advise on scholarship and award policies & procedures
- Grants awards, scholarships & bursaries open to students of more than one college or school
- Recommends establishment of awards, scholarships and bursaries

**Equitable & Transparent Recognition**



Source: USask Bynder

## Scholarships & Awards Committee

The Scholarships and Awards Committee has been busy behind the scenes sorting through applications and adjudicating awards open to students across multiple colleges—important work that helps ensure recognition is fair, thoughtful, and consistent. They'll be bringing forward their report on the *Best and Brightest* award this month.

Beyond adjudication, the committee has also been spending time strengthening the structures that support this work, including refining university-wide adjudication guidelines and updating its Terms of Reference.

*For questions on S&A, connect with Alex at [alex.beldan@usask.ca](mailto:alex.beldan@usask.ca)  
S&A Committee Coordinator.*

# Teaching, Learning, and Academic Resources Committee

It's been a very full year thus far for teaching and learning conversations, with plenty of thoughtful discussion about how the university supports students, instructors, and the wider workforce.

## Micro-credentials & Workforce Skills

Micro-credentials continue to be a topic of interest as short, flexible learning options focused on specific skills and labour-market needs. Several examples were shared, particularly from agriculture and bioresources, where industry-driven skill gaps have shaped program design. These offerings typically combine online, non-credit learning with an optional assessment that leads to a credential. While models are still evolving, the discussion emphasized that micro-credentials are meant to complement—not replace—degrees and certificates, and to respond to real workforce needs.

## Upskilling, Reskilling & Career Readiness

Conversations also focused on upskilling (deepening current skills) and reskilling (preparing for new roles). Employers consistently rate human skills—such as communication, problem-solving, and collaboration—very highly, while demand for technological fluency, including AI and data skills, continues to grow. Career Services shared how their work now goes well beyond résumés, supporting students and alumni with skill development, career exploration, and connections to emerging workforce trends.

## Accessibility Planning

Work is underway on a new [Accessibility](#)



[Plan](#), guided by universal design and intersectionality. The plan spans student experience, [teaching and learning](#), research, employee experience, systems, and physical spaces. A key takeaway was that accessibility should be built into everyday practices, policies, and spaces—rather than added as an afterthought. Student feedback affirmed the plan's priorities while reinforcing the importance of transparency and ongoing engagement.

## Flexible Learning & Pathways

Flexible learning continues to grow, offering students choice around mode, pace, and place. While this expansion increases access, discussions highlighted the importance of intentional design, strong supports, and attention to student connection—particularly in asynchronous or remote settings. Ongoing evaluation will help understand long-term impacts on retention, completion, and professional readiness.

## Student Connection & Loneliness

A thoughtful conversation explored student loneliness and the importance of relationship-

# Teaching, Learning, and Academic Resources Committee

rich environments. Contributing factors included large classes, online learning, busy schedules, and limited opportunities for meaningful connection. Ideas ranged from learning communities and welcoming spaces to more interactive classrooms and mentorship. The message was clear: connection supports learning, wellbeing, and success—and everyone has a role to play.

## Academic Integrity & Assessment

Work is underway on revised Academic Misconduct Regulations. Academic integrity discussions focused on why misconduct happens and how better teaching, assessment design, clarity, and supports can reduce pressure and misunderstanding—especially in a landscape shaped by generative AI. The emphasis of the regulation revisions was on consistency, education, and creating conditions where students are set up to succeed.

## TLARC Working Groups

Several working groups have been quietly keeping busy, digging into some important teaching and learning topics. One group is reviewing research and practices related to

teaching effectiveness, including how student learning experience data is used at other institutions. Another is focused on generative AI—looking at campus-wide needs, barriers, and what “AI literacy” should reasonably look like for different users. A joint working group is also supporting the rollout of the updated Academic Courses Policy, with a strong emphasis on practical guidance and change management so instructors and colleges are supported—not just compliant—as new policies come into effect.

The conversations reflect a strong focus on improving learning experiences, supporting meaningful connections, and aligning education in the changing world.

## Understanding Graduate Outcomes

Work is underway to better understand where graduates go and how their skills align with the labour market. Data from Statistics Canada and provincial partners is helping paint a clearer picture of employment trends, mobility, and outcomes. While survey response rates still have room to grow, the information is already shaping planning and decision-making.

---

## For Those Who'd Like to Explore Further:

USask Reporting & Analytics	<a href="https://leadership.usask.ca/priorities/reporting.php">https://leadership.usask.ca/priorities/reporting.php</a>
USask Major Maps	<a href="https://students.usask.ca/major-maps/index.php">https://students.usask.ca/major-maps/index.php</a>
Government of Canada Job Bank – Trends	<a href="https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis">https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis</a>
Saskatchewan Occupational Outlook	<a href="https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/hire-train-and-manage-employees/labour-market-information/saskatchewan-detailed-occupational-outlook">https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/hire-train-and-manage-employees/labour-market-information/saskatchewan-detailed-occupational-outlook</a>

*For questions on TLARC, connect with Danielle at [danielle.rudulier@usask.ca](mailto:danielle.rudulier@usask.ca), TLARC Coordinator.*

# Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work Committee

RSAW has kept busy with a full slate of topics and plenty of good conversation.

**Updated University Standards** RSAW provided comment at many stages for a refreshed set of university standards that has been completed by the University Review Committee, shaped by wide consultation across colleges, departments, Indigenous partners, faculty groups, and unions. Big-picture changes include clearer language around teaching, research, and service expectations, with a strong emphasis on fairness, flexibility, and transparency. New pathways were added for teaching-intensive faculty, and departments will have more room to define what “appropriate” scholarly outlets look like for their disciplines.

**Ethics, Ethics, Ethics** Annual ethics board reports (both human and animal) made the rounds, and updates to animal care and use policies are still under discussion, with more to come before final decisions.

**Undergraduate Research: Growing Pains & Big Plans** The undergraduate research portfolio continues to expand, supporting student research through programs like FYRE, SURE, and national awards. Challenges around funding, supervision capacity, and access are well recognized, and work is underway to improve data transparency, expand opportunities, and better showcase student research. Expect clearer information for students and more strategic planning driven by campus feedback.

**New Research Management System on the Horizon.** Behind the scenes, the university is retiring an aging research management system in favor of a more modern, integrated platform. The goal? Less paperwork, smoother approvals, better tracking, and fewer headaches for researchers. The rollout starts with animal management and ethics systems, with plenty of communication planned along the way.

Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work Committee (RSAW)

Advancing Discovery & Innovation

What They Do:

- Support research policies
- Advise on ethics & research grant policies
- Receive annual reports from OVPR and CGPS

Best-practise & Research Oversight

**Arts Research & Creative Futures** The School for the Arts is ramping up research activity, building new partnerships, and looking to modernize graduate programming. Plans include strengthening MFA programs and eventually launching a practice-based PhD that aligns with international standards—helping Saskatchewan’s vibrant (but under-resourced) arts sector connect more directly to research and innovation.

**Travel Smart, Research Safe** Travel security took centre stage with reminders that protecting research, data, and devices matters just as much as packing your passport. Practical tips included minimizing data on devices, using secure storage, and staying alert on public networks. There’s even talk of a future loaner-device program to

make safe travel easier. More centralized resources and broader awareness are on the way. More on this topic will come back to Council in May.

*For questions on RSAW, connect with Danielle at [danielle.rudulier@usask.ca](mailto:danielle.rudulier@usask.ca), RSAW Committee Coordinator.*

# Planning and Priorities Committee

The Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC) has been busy lately, tackling a wide mix of topics—and managing to keep the conversations thoughtful and constructive along the way.

## Keeping Campus Safe

Members checked in on ongoing efforts to improve safety across campus, including better coordination with city and provincial partners, enhanced training, upgraded monitoring systems, and more focus on prevention. There was also good discussion about how to share safety information clearly (without causing alarm), while balancing costs and shared responsibility.

## Dollars, Sense, and Sustainability

On the financial side, the focus was long-term sustainability. Updates covered budget planning, accountability, and ways to manage costs while exploring new revenue ideas. Members also exchanged thoughts on simplifying processes, supporting entrepreneurial initiatives, and protecting the university's research strengths—all without piling on extra admin work.

## Affordability Matters

Tuition and affordability were also on the agenda. Student feedback pointed to priorities like scholarships and bursaries, mental health supports, digital tools, and work opportunities. Members acknowledged the pressures students face—particularly graduate and international

students—while balancing access, quality, and competitiveness.

## Enrolment: Staying Flexible

Enrolment planning sparked energetic discussion. Rather than setting everything in stone, the university is taking a flexible, adaptable approach. Retention stood out as especially important—keeping current students is one of the most effective ways to grow.

Members also highlighted the need to align enrolment with space, staffing, and supports, and to use flexible or remote learning options where they make sense.

## EDI, Sustainability & Big-Picture Impact

Updates on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion showed steady progress across teaching, research, policies, spaces, and workplace culture. Members recognized this as ongoing work that involves learning and reflection along the way. Sustainability discussions

highlighted real gains in reducing emissions and expanding sustainability-focused teaching and research, along with honest conversations about the challenges of going further.



# Planning and Priorities Committee

## Looking Ahead

A new Economic and Social Impact Study showcased just how much the university contributes locally and beyond—from workforce development to research and community benefits. While the numbers are strong, members agreed there's more story to tell.

The committee also received updates on alumni email changes, privacy policies, and the expanding role of artificial intelligence—focusing on responsible use, AI literacy, and smart investments.

Overall, PPC's conversations reflect a shared commitment to strengthening the university now, while planning thoughtfully for what's next.

*For questions on PPC, connect with Danielle at [danielle.rudulier@usask.ca](mailto:danielle.rudulier@usask.ca), PPC Committee Coordinator.*

## Governance Committee



### Governance Committee

*Ensuring Clear, Fair and Effective Governance*

#### What They Do:

- **Update bylaws & committee structures**
- **Oversee rules & academic appeals**
- **Advise on governance issues**

**Compliance & Fairness**

Much of the Governance Committee's work shows up at Council through proposed bylaw changes or updates to faculty council bylaws—but there's also important work happening behind the scenes.

Currently, the committee is taking a closer look at committee workloads and decision-making roles to ensure responsibilities are balanced and committees are well positioned to carry out Council's work. They're also reviewing how university-level appeal boards are formed and supported, emphasizing the significance of these decisions for students.

In addition, the committee is working on ways to better support faculty councils as they update their bylaws, including clarifying what those bylaws should—and shouldn't—cover. Much of this work is still underway, with some initiatives in early stages. Updates will be shared with Council as the work progresses.



*For questions on Governance, connect with Jordan at [Jordan.sherbino@usask.ca](mailto:Jordan.sherbino@usask.ca)  
Governance Committee Coordinator.*



## COUNCIL – Did Ya Know?

Did you know...

Council has carried **37** motions from September to March including:

- 9** admission decisions
- 2** new programs
- 6** new certificates; several terminations
- 4** bylaw changes
- 4** search committee nominations; several filled vacancies
- 1** centre

There have also been **76** Council Committee meetings to date!

Thank you to all Council and GAA members for dedicating your time to this key work of University Governance.

*“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.”*

*— Anne Lamott*

## Brain Break

Unscramble the letters to form words related to academics and governance:

MCADECAI \_\_\_\_\_

GILLNAPN \_\_\_\_\_

GNITCAEH \_\_\_\_\_

GRNNAEIL \_\_\_\_\_

HCERAERS \_\_\_\_\_

SEULR \_\_\_\_\_

RODRE \_\_\_\_\_

ALORHSPSHCI \_\_\_\_\_

SGNITMEES \_\_\_\_\_

EACVRENGO \_\_\_\_\_