

Attendance: J. Kalra (Chair). See appendix A for listing of members in attendance.

The chair called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m., observing that quorum had been attained.

1. Adoption of the agenda

SINGH/SARJEANT-JENKINS: To adopt the agenda as circulated.

CARRIED

2. Opening remarks

Dr. Kalra welcomed members and visitors, and reminded those present of the usual seating arrangements. He then invited Ms. Sandra Calver, acting university secretary to provide a brief summary of the Council election for members at large.

Ms. Calver reported that there were 35 nominations for 16 vacant positions for members at large for three-year terms. In addition one member was elected to a one-year term due to the resignation of a Council member and one member was elected by acclamation to a one-year term due to an administrative leave. Dr. Kalra congratulated all members who were elected and encouraged members and non-members to become involved in the various committees of Council, emphasizing that their engagement and interest in Council matters was essential for the university's collegial self-governance. The deadline for nominations to Council committees is April 1.

3. Minutes of the meeting of February 28, 2013

KULSHRESHTHA/TYLER: That the Council minutes of February 28, 2013 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

4. Business from the minutes

No business was identified as arising from the minutes.

5. Report of the Vice-president Research

With the permission of the Council, the chair re-ordered the agenda to place item 7 Report of the Vice-president Research prior to the President's report. Dr. Chad thanked the chair for this adjustment to enable her to join her AUCC colleagues on a federal budget update. She also thanked the Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee and its chair for suggesting that she provide an update on the institution's research agenda at a Council meeting once in the spring and again in the fall. Monthly research updates are included in the President's and Provost's reports to Council.

Dr. Chad outlined the development of an institution-wide voluntary peer-review process, beginning in 2009 with CIHR, followed by SSHRC in 2010 and NSERC in 2012, and reported on the success rates of those who elected to participate in the review process versus those who elected not to participate. Other initiatives include UnivRS, a new research IT system being developed with the goal of providing faculty with a "one-stop shop" to manage all aspects of grants, contracts, ethics, CV and publications to streamline the approval process. Importantly UnivRS will be linked to the

university's financial systems. An added benefit is that UnivRS will permit faculty members to be informed of research activity campus wide. Concluding her formal presentation, she noted the Office of the Vice-president Research website is being reconfigured from a faculty member vantage point to create a fresh and innovative look and design.

The chair invited comments and questions of Dr. Chad. Several members asked questions regarding the compatibility of UnivRS with other university systems, such as the repository for faculty member publications in the College of Medicine. Dr. Chad indicated that UnivRS will take into account current and best practices internally and externally and streamline these within UnivRS. The system is being developed in collaboration and consultation with other members to the U15 to ensure the system is true to national systems and forms.

A member made reference to the licensing of the two technologies highlighted in the VPR February update and the statement that the U of S ranked #1 in Canada with over \$520,000 in licensing revenue earned per full time U of S technology transfer equivalent employee. He noted there are additional means to advance the commercialization of innovative ideas and technologies, such as the CIHR Proof of Principle competition, which looks at promising ideas for their patentability and potential commercialization. He noted that in his experience of reviewing over 300 applications in this competition, he had not seen a single application from the U of S.

6. Report of the President

The chair invited President Busch-Vishniac to present her report. Dr. Bush-Vishniac indicated she would comment on a few items as an update, beginning with a description of the recent College of Medicine accreditation site visit. Based upon the report delivered at the exit interview, she outlined her belief is the reviewers understood the complexities of the college and were presented with accurate information. A draft report on the findings of the accrediting committee will be submitted to the university to correct any errors of fact. The report will then be submitted to the various accrediting committees in June, and the university will receive further communication on the status of the college's accreditation thereafter. She extended thanks to those members who participated in the review and conveyed the gratitude of the reviewers for the hospitality of the university and the college and the forthrightness of the answers presented.

The president reported that last week was Aboriginal Achievement Week. For the first time ever, there were complaints that the various items were competing with one another, due to the large number of events. This is a very positive sign, and she commended USSU President Jared Brown for his efforts in obtaining funding support for a very successful week of events. Related events and activities include the new Treaty no. 6 flag gifted to the university, the new tab for Aboriginal initiatives added to the university website, and the mapping of those university programs specifically designed to appeal to First Nations and Métis communities across the province.

The third item the president updated Council on was the provincial budget. She reported that the core increase of 2% to the university's operating budget speaks to the continuing commitment of the province to the university at a time when the other post-secondary institutions have fared significantly less well. However, the 2% increase does not obviate the need for the planned budgetary reductions. Once additional analysis is complete, an email communication will be submitted to the university community with the details of the budget and how the university fared.

A member sought clarification on the targeted funding committed to the Academic Health Sciences Complex. The provost answered on behalf of the president, indicating that the over \$13 million in targeted funding covered a set of activities; within this envelope the government committed \$4 million in operational funding to the complex and \$4 million in capital funding for the renovation of the A and B wings and continued construction of the complex.

7. Report of the Provost

Dr. Fairbairn commended members to his written report and indicated he wished to comment on four additional items: Aboriginal Achievement Week and the Aboriginal Symposium; tuition rates; the program prioritization task forces; and the provincial budget.

The provost reiterated the tremendous success of Aboriginal Achievement week and the success of the Aboriginal Symposium entitled “Taking Stock”. Events included a gathering, round dance, and celebrations of Aboriginal traditions. Posters from the symposium will be made available in electronic form.

The university has announced its 2013-14 tuition rates and continues to adhere to its principles for setting tuition. This year tuition fees were announced in advance of the announcement of the provincial budget, highlighting the autonomy of the university and the Board of Governors to fix tuition rates based upon principle rather than financial need. An average 4.5% tuition increase was set. The increase in tuition in the College of Law is projected to be 6% next year, following two years of substantial increases to close the gap between the college and other law schools across Canada. Other fees are and available at www.usask.ca/tuition. In the future, the university plans to provide students with a multi-year perspective on tuition rates.

The work of the TransformUS initiative continues. The two task forces have been appointed, and the membership is available at www.usask.ca/finance. Co-chairs for the Academic Program Transformation Task Force are Beth Bilson and Lisa Kalynchuk, and co-chairs for the Support Service Transformation Task Force are Bob Tyler and Kevin Schneider. The task forces convened in March to begin work on developing the program prioritization criteria and weighting, and these will be submitted to Council in April.

The provincial grant realized is close to that projected and reflects the continuing need to streamline and seek efficiencies within the core operations of the university. At a high-level, the province’s contribution to the university commits to continued expansion of student funding, increased capital and operating funding and funding for significant research and innovation activities. The next financial town hall will be held on June 13 from 12:30 – 1:30 pm in Convocation Hall and will provide a projection for the university’s multi-year budgeting process.

The chair invited comments and questions for the provost.

A member from the fine arts stated that although he appreciated the difficulty of constituting the task forces, he questioned the wisdom of not including an individual from the fine arts in their composition, noting the names of two nominees from the fine arts had been submitted. Further, he expressed that the Dickeson model is viewed as unkind to the humanities and fine art. The lack of a member from the fine arts lends credence to the groundswell of anxiety regarding the ability for the unique nature of fine arts programs to be understood. In response, the provost outlined there are other areas not represented and that the task forces are not intended as constituent assemblies. He then outlined the extensive process undertaken to select members, which balanced considerations of gender, experience, leadership and the ability to adopt a university-wide perspective. He concurred that the fine arts are unique, as are other areas.

A member from the College of Medicine inquired regarding the search for a new dean of the college and expressed his disappointment that almost certainly the college will have an acting dean until January 2014. He asked if anything could be done to accelerate the process. The Provost committed to the best of his ability to not have a succession of acting deans in the college. He then reported on the negotiations with prior candidates, which were promising as they came very close to confirming an appointment. At this time, the membership of the search committee must be reconfirmed and it is advised that the ground lie fallow for some period of time before the search is actively recommenced. The goal is to have a new dean in place by January 2014; however,

considerations of fit and ensuring the right candidate is put in place will take precedent over considerations of timing.

8. Student societies

8.1 Report from the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

There was no report from the USSU.

8.2 Report from the Graduate Students' Association

GSA president Ehimai Ohiozebou presented a verbal report commenting on two major issues: the U-pass implementation and the GSA awards gala event. A majority of graduate students voted in favour of the transit system U-pass. The focus is now on a smooth implementation during the pilot period. The gala awards was a sold-out event with over 270 students, faculty, and staff in attendance to recognize the research achievements of graduate students and those who support them. Mr. Ohiozebou thanked the president for her support and encouragement and colleagues Elizabeth Omeara and Nicole Callihoo for their time and efforts in planning the event. Mr. Ohiozebou then recognized several Council members in attendance at the event and acknowledged the receipt of the Advising Excellence award by Council member Julita Vassileva and the GSA Champion award by Jay Kalra. A round of applause ensued for these members.

The chair invited members of Council to join him in thanking Mr. Ohiozebou for his report and commended the GSA on this inaugural event.

9. Academic Programs Committee

Professor Dobson, chair of the Academic Programs Committee presented the committee's reports to Council.

9.1 Request for decision: College of Medicine: changes to admissions qualifications

Professor Dobson outlined an amendment to the motion to add the words "according to the framework as described by the college" to ensure the motion presented to Council reflected the motion presented to the academic programs committee. The motion reads:

"That Council approve the College of Medicine admission requirement for a four-year baccalaureate degree by Saskatchewan residents at entrance to medicine according to the framework as described by the college effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2015."

Professor Dobson invited Dr. Barry Ziola, chair of the admissions committee in the College of Medicine to make a brief presentation.

Dr. Ziola presented three slides with statistical data outlining the academic requirements at admission to English Canadian medical schools; the percentage of students that are admitted to the college with a two-year entrance average; the total number of applicants, the grade point average (GPA) required to obtain an interview and the GPA cut-off for admission. He emphasized that requiring students to have completed an undergraduate degree for admission bolsters the college's goal of admitting students who are more mature and better able to withstand the pressures of medical school. Completion of a degree also supports that these students will have had greater potential to engage in undergraduate research.

He indicated the changes submitted represent the first major redress of the college's academic degree requirements in 25 years and are strongly supported by the College of Medicine

Faculty Council. From a practical viewpoint, the number of applicants applying with a two-year average that meet the GPA cut-off has swelled to the point that having the resources to conduct the interviews is increasingly difficult. Importantly, those students who enter after two years of undergraduate study are admitted based upon junior classes as opposed to those students who advance in a degree program and take progressively more difficult courses. The college has found that some students will switch colleges from first to second year in order to continue to take more first-year classes and regards this as “gaming” the system.

The chair invited comments and discussion on the motion.

A student visitor enrolled in the M.D. program spoke of the difficulty some students have in transitioning from high school to university and that the average student can expect a 20% drop in marks. She noted that many of her fellow classmates mentioned that they had a hard time transitioning to university and that their marks were substantially lower in their first year or two of university. She questioned whether students would be able to come back after having a poor academic year and achieve a competitive average. As a result, the new admission process may make admission to Medicine more exclusive rather than inclusive. She also pointed out it is not uncommon for individuals to experience illness or personal loss or trauma at some point and therefore be less competitive under the new system for reasons beyond their control. Although she supported the requirement for an undergraduate degree, she advocated for continued student input in considering the new steps for calculation of admissions averages. For example, eight out of 13 English-speaking medical schools use a weighted average or allow applicants the opportunity to drop their lowest academic year or a number of their lowest credit units.

Dr. Ziola replied that the admissions committee decided against weighted averages due to the amount of administrative work involved. He also spoke of the flexibility of providing a 40-month enrolment period in which to complete the admission requirements, thereby giving the students the opportunity to take time off if needed for personal reasons.

A member spoke in favour of admitting students having some prior involvement in research as supportive of the clinician-scientist model and the Ph.D/M.D. program, which requires a bachelors degree for admission. The point was made that very few faculty will take on a summer research student after only one year of undergraduate study.

There was a question regarding how the proposed changes would affect Aboriginal applicants. Dr. Ziola provided assurance that the proposed framework and flexible enrolment period suits many Aboriginal applicants, and that Aboriginal equity applicants compete amongst themselves for seats.

In response to the concern regarding the potential drop in applications, Dr. Ziola indicated this was not considered a serious concern due to the number of applicants. There is a year lead-time to implement the new admission process. The changes will first affect students who apply for admission in the fall 2014. David Hannah, Vice-president of Student Affairs asked that the college work with the SESD recruitment office to provide adequate notice of the impending changes.

DOBSON/RIGBY: That Council approve the College of Medicine admission requirement for a four-year baccalaureate degree by Saskatchewan residents at entrance to medicine according to the framework as described by the college effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2015.

CARRIED

DOBSON/RIGBY: That Council approve the College of Medicine admission requirements for out-of-province (OP) applicants that all university courses taken prior to and after application will be considered in calculation of their average, effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2014.

CARRIED

9.2 Request for decision: Academic Courses Policy changes

DOBSON/GREER: That Council approve the changes to the Academic Courses Policy to include a section on Class Recordings and to update sections on the course syllabus.

CARRIED

10. Governance Committee

10.1 Notice of Motion: Additional term to terms of reference for all Council committees

Professor Gord Zello presented these items as chair of the Governance Committee.

ZELLO/DOBSON: That Council approve the additional term ‘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’ to the terms of reference for all Council committees.

Professor Zello explained the impetus for the change in the Council committee terms of reference arises in response to requests for committee members to serve on administrative committees. The change will permit Council committees to determine if a committee member or another individual designated by the committee should serve should the committee support the request. All Council committees will be asked to report annually to Council on any service provided to other committees.

A Council committee chair spoke in favour of the proposed change, indicating that the number of requests to serve on other committees has become excessive. The option to name a designate provides a means to provide faculty member input without asking committee members to take on additional work and enables the committee to seek an individual with the proper skill set.

10.2 Notice of Motion: Disestablishment of the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Support Committee and establishment of the Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee

ZELLO/DOBSON: That Council disestablish the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Support Committee, and in their place establish the Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee, with the proposed membership and terms of reference as attached.

Professor Zello outlined the consultation regarding the proposed merger. The desire to merge the two committees arises from the committees themselves in response to the creation of the university’s Learning Charter.

A member inquired whether “promoting student, instructor and institutional commitments and responsibilities” as set out in the Learning Charter was appropriate for a committee of Council, as opposed to providing oversight. Professor John Kleefeld, chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee responded that the committee tracks the three commitment pillars within the charter and sees itself not only charged with their development, but implementation and adoption.

A member requested clarification on the effective date of the proposed merger. The new committee is intended to be established effective July 1, 2013.

11. Other business

No other business was identified as arising from the minutes.

12. Question period

There were no questions.

13. Adjournment

DAUM SHANKS/DOBSON: That the meeting be adjourned at 4:34 p.m

CARRIED

Next meeting – 2:30 pm, April 18, 2013