

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:30pm.

2. Tributes

There was a tribute for Professor Emeritus David Male from the College of Engineering presented by Professor Jim Bugg.

3. Adoption of the agenda

(Walker/Flynn): *That the agenda be approved as circulated.*

CARRIED.

4. Chair's Opening remarks

The Chair of Council, Dr. Jay Wilson, acknowledged that Council meets on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis, paying respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirming our relationship with one another. He also noted that given the remote meeting modality, that members may be connecting from other locations and that we acknowledge our shared relations with the Indigenous peoples of this land.

The chair informed Council members of the protocols for the synchronous remote meeting.

Dr. Wilson reported that the regular monthly meetings between Council chairs and the President's Executive Committee continued to take place over the summer months. He reported that the discussion topics at the last meeting were the pandemic response, the COVID-19 financial impacts, and the upcoming post-pandemic shift project.

5. Approval of Minutes of the meeting of September 17, 2020

(Bruni-Bossio/Rayan): *That the minutes be approved as circulated.*

CARRIED.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was a suggestion that reports to Council from senior administrators should be provided in advance of the meetings.

7. Report of the President

The president thanked Council members for their participation in the remote meeting. He reported that the university will close from December 21, 2020 to January 2, 2021 to offer members of the campus community some reprieve during this difficult period. He thanked the People and Resources department for identifying creative solutions, and the faculty for their flexibility with the exam schedule.

The president reported that the federal government has announced amended travel restrictions which will allow international students to study in Canada. He thanked Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning and

Student Experience, Dr. Patti McDougall and her team for developing a COVID-19 readiness plan early on for the benefit of international students.

He reported that the university's draft Sustainability Strategy is being presented for feedback across campus and will be presented to Council in December or January [action item no. 1].

The president provided introductory comments on the presentation being provided at this Council meeting on the financial consequences of the pandemic. He noted that universities (and other sectors) across the country are facing similar challenges. He also announced that a post-pandemic shift team is being commissioned and an update will be provided at the November Council meeting [action item no. 2]. The work will provide useful insights to inform decisions about adapting to the new reality, which must be done in order for us to be the 'university the world needs.'

There was a question about the potential for growth in enrolment to offset the financial consequences of the pandemic. The president responded that this would be addressed in the Provost's presentation.

There was a question about openness, transparency and accountability in communications. The president said that the President's Executive Committee would welcome suggestions on the matter.

8. Report of the Provost

8.1 Financial Update for 2020/21

Greg Fowler, Vice-President Finance and Resources, presented the 2020/21 financial update as provided in Attachment B. The presentation highlighted impacts of COVID-19, the budget for 2020/21, operating fund trends, the USask financial sustainability strategy, the feedback received from the Board of Governors, and the priority of balancing the budget. Mr. Fowler outlined the ways that the university's financials are compiled, reviewed, and audited. He noted that the information presented was prepared based on the assumption that the winter term would be taking place in person, but will be updated to reflect remote delivery as is now planned.

Melissa Just, Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic, outlined tuition, student fee and enrolment projections and reported on the implications for the budget. She reported on the process and timelines for the resource allocation process. She also highlighted that operating expenses continue to exceed revenues and that financial reserves have been depleted.

There was a round of Q & A.

There was a question about how much money has been saved on utilities since March 2020 and whether there is any need to adjust the budgeting and forecasting methods in this environment. Mr. Fowler responded that total utility savings over the summer were about \$580K, primarily on electricity due to savings on air conditioning. He reminded Council that the budgeting methodology was modified in 2014 with a move to 'envelope budgeting.' He reminded Council of the reductions to the unrestricted provincial operating grant that had occurred since that time.

There was a question about the university's ongoing financial sustainability. Dr. Just responded that for the most part, previously, only incremental changes to USask's budget have been made, and that we need to make more fundamental changes in order to ensure that our operating budget is stable and sustainable.

There was a question about why this discussion on finances was happening at University Council although the Board of Governors that has responsibility for financial oversight. Dr. Just replied that the presentation was made in response to a request at the last Council meeting in September.

There was another question about whether reserve funds were depleted due to COVID-19. Mr. Fowler responded that COVID had small impact at the beginning of last year, but that the more significant negative results were for reductions in investment income, and previously (back to 2015/16) as a result of the reductions to the provincial operating grant.

8.2 2020/21 Enrolment Update

Dr. Patti McDougall gave a presentation on 2020/21 enrolment (available here: <https://www.usask.ca/isa/university-reports/enrolment/enrolment-report-fall-2020.pdf>). She reported that USask is on-track to meet the 2025 enrolment goals. She reported on the levels of instruction occurring remotely vs. in person.

She also updated Council on the recent presentation of teaching awards by the Gwenna Moss Centre, noting that a full list of recipients was available in the *On Campus News*.

9. PRT (Pandemic Response and Recovery Team) Report

Dr. Darcy Marciniuk, chair of the Pandemic Response Team, gave a verbal update on the COVID-19 situation at USask. He reminded Council that the draft winter implementation plan had been posted online. He further reported on:

- numbers of those who'd taken the COVID-19 safety training, other safety resources, and on the good adherence to the university's mask protocol;
- the number of symptomatic reports, close contacts, those self-isolating, and positive cases; and
- the number of people approved for field research and on-campus presence.

He conveyed that the top concern raised by students has been availability of study space. He noted the study spaces in Education, STM, and the Library, and that the priority is to ensure the safety of students.

There was a question about whether campus might shut down completely. Dr. Marciniuk responded that all the preventative measures that are in place are in an effort to try avoid such a situation, and that the university will continue to abide by public health and safety guidelines and the direction of the SHA.

10. Student Societies

10.1 Report from the USSU

Autumn Larose-Smith, President of the USSU, presented the report of the USSU as provided in the materials. She reported that Student Council has been meeting, that they have populated their committees, and that a campus clubs office has been running virtually. She also noted that UPasses are being distributed on an appointments-basis. She also reminded Council that Louis Loft is still open.

There were no questions on the report.

10.2 Report from the GSA

Humaira Inam, President of the GSA, presented the report from the GSA as provided in the materials. She reported on the student wellness, professional skills development, and engagement activities of the GSA.

There were no questions on the report.

11. Academic Programs Committee (APC)

Dr. Susan Detmer, Chair of APC, presented one item for decision and one item for information as provided in the materials.

11.1 Request for Decision: Minor in International Business for the Bachelor of Commerce (B.Comm) program

(Detmer/Deters): *It is recommended that Council approve the minor in International Business for the Bachelor of Commerce (B.Comm) program to replace the Global Business Stream and Advanced Global Business Stream, effective May 2021.*

CARRIED.

11.2 Report for Information: Name change for the Operations Management field of study to Supply Chain Management

No questions.

12. Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC)

Dr. Darrell Mousseau, Chair of PPC, presented one request for decision.

12.1 Request for Decision: Centres Policy

(Mousseau/Burgess): *It is recommended that Council approve revisions to the Centres Policy (2004), with changes to take effect immediately following Board of Governors approval, anticipated December 15, 2020.*

Dr. Karen Chad, Vice-President Research, summarized the main changes proposed. She thanked PPC, which provides oversight for the Centres Policy, and the PPC Centres Subcommittee, which was actively involved in the policy revisions.

There was a question about the process for establishing research collaboratives vs. applying for provisional status. Ms. Laura Zink, Director of Research Acceleration and Strategic Initiatives, responded that these are separate processes, but that the provisional status is intended to be more flexible and expeditious particularly in cases where there is potential for external partnerships or funding.

There were two questions about how existing centres would be transitioned into the new model and about their reporting requirements. Dr. Chad responded that work is underway through her office to ensure good governance, appropriate and transparent reporting, and sustainable practices for centres. She also noted that the proposed policy and procedures account for existing reporting and review mechanisms.

CARRIED.

13. Governance Committee

Dr. Terry Wotherspoon, Chair of the Governance Committee, presented three items.

13.1 Request for Decision: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

(Wotherspoon/Larre): *It is recommended that Council approve the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, pending approval from the Board of Governors, effective October 15, 2020.*

Dr. Wotherspoon emphasized the significance of the proposed policy for the university – that it provides the institution an opportunity to outline its position on the multiple dimensions of EDI, and how they should be balanced with the professional activities and academic discourses that are so important to the university. He reported that two changes were made to the draft policy since the request for input was presented to Council, as indicated in the materials. He also noted that the Board of Governors approved the policy at its October meeting, pending the approval of Council.

There was a question about the definition of diversity. Dr. Wotherspoon responded that actions coming from the policy will be identified in the EDI strategy and action plan.

There was another question about seeking balance between the policy and academic practices and academic freedom. The Chair of Council responded that this question had been previously addressed by Ms. Cheryl Carver, Associate Vice-President, People and Resources, in advance of the meeting.

There was a question about who was consulted. Dr. Wotherspoon referred back to the information presented in the agenda package.

There was another question about the link to the anti-racism policy. Ms. Carver responded that the policy is in development and that the work is being led by the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement.

CARRIED.

13.2 Notice of Motion: College of Education Faculty Council Membership

It is recommended that Council approve the membership of the College of Education's Faculty Council effective immediately, as part Part III section V.1. (A&B) of the Council Bylaws.

Dr. Wotherspoon noted the extensive consultation that took place in the development of these Bylaws to ensure the appropriate balance of voice, vote, and participation amongst various constituencies, with particular attention to ensuring Indigenous vote, voice, and representation.

13.3 Notice of Motion: Planning and Priorities Committee Terms of Reference

It is recommended that Council approve the addition of the standing subcommittee on centres to the Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC) of Council's terms of reference as part two, section V of the Council bylaws, effective immediately.

Dr. Wotherspoon reported that this change was precipitated by the revisions to the Centres Policy.

14. Nominations Committee

Dr. Paul Jones, Chair of the Nominations Committee, presented two items for decision.

14.1 Request for Decision: Academic Programs Committee Nomination

(Jones/Lamb): *It is recommended that Council approve the nomination of Steven Seiferling as the sessional lecturer representative to the Academic Programs Committee (APC) effective immediately to June 30, 2021.*

Dr. Wilson called for nominations from the floor three times.

CARRIED.

14.2 Request for Decision: Promotion Appeal Panel nominations

(Jones/Lamb): *It is recommended that Council approve the nomination of Valerie Thompson and Susantha Gomis to the Promotions Appeals Panel effective immediately to June 30, 2022.*

Dr. Wilson called for nominations from the floor three times.

CARRIED.

15. Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work (RSAW) Committee

Dr. Marjorie Delbaere, Chair of RSAW, presented one item for information.

15.1 Report for Information: 2019/20 Report of Allegations and Breaches under the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy

She noted the balance between ensuring confidentiality and importance of disclosing the number of incidences annually. There were no questions on the report.

16. Other business

Dr. Chelsea Willness, University Secretary, presented an item for information in follow-up to the request that was made at the September 17, 2020 Council meeting.

16.1 Report for Information: Review of the University's "Search and Review Procedures for Senior Administrators"

Dr. Willness reported that prior to receiving Board approval for the revisions to the procedures, feedback was received from Council leadership which was incorporated into the Board document.

There was a suggestion that the Governance Committee consider adding the Joint Council-Board Committee for the Review of the Search and Review Procedures for Senior Administrators to the Council Bylaws [action item no. 3].

17. Question period

There was a question about whether the decrease in number of volunteer notetakers for Access and Equity Services and the increased number of accommodation requests was related to the move to remote learning. Dr. McDougall responded that it is a blend of different factors.

There was a request to put enrolment data in the context of other U15 universities. Dr. McDougall responded that this information will be available online.

There was a question about the definition of active researcher for TABBS purposes as compared to RSAW activity for Tri-Council funding. Dr. Just responded that there are several different criteria used in the definition of active researcher. The matter will be referred to the RSAW Committee of Council [action item no.4].

18. Adjournment

(Flynn): *Adjourned.*

Table 1. Action Items

Pg. and no.	Action item	Responsibility	Timeline
p.2 s.7	1. Draft Sustainability Strategy	President	Dec/Jan
p.3 s.7	2. Post-pandemic shift update	President	November
p.6 s.16.1	3. Search and Reviews Review Committee to Governance	Dr. Willness	TBD
p.7 s.17	4. Active researcher definition to be considered by RSAW	Dr. Just	TBD

Appendix A: Listing of members in attendance

Appendix B: Financial presentation 2020/21

Next Council meeting is November 19, 2020 – Please send regrets to Michelle.Kjargaard@usask.ca

Financial Overview

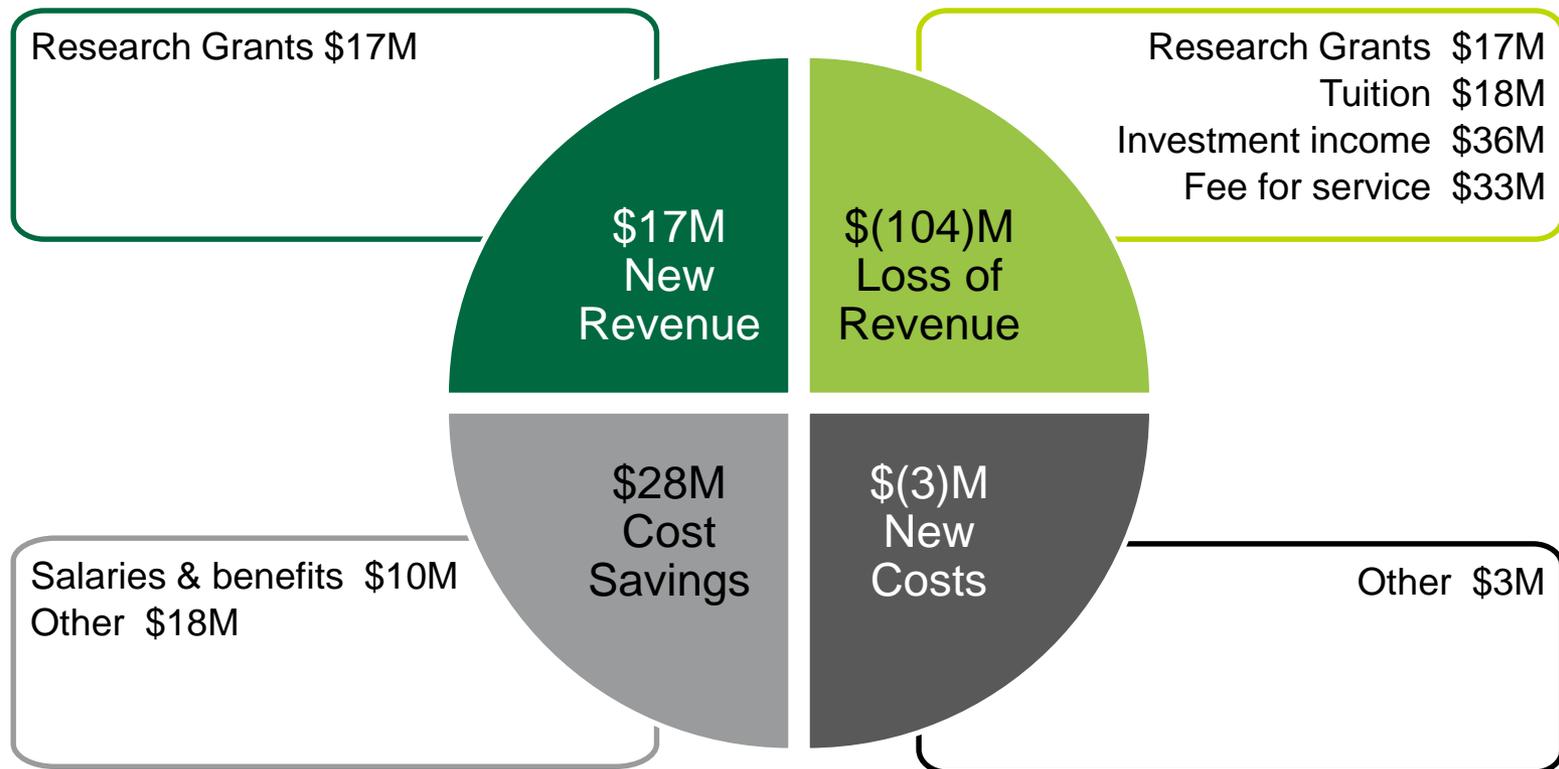
**Presentation to University Council
October 15, 2020**

Presentation Highlights:

- Budgeted COVID Impacts
- Budget 2020-21
- Operating Fund Trends
- USask Financial Sustainability Strategy

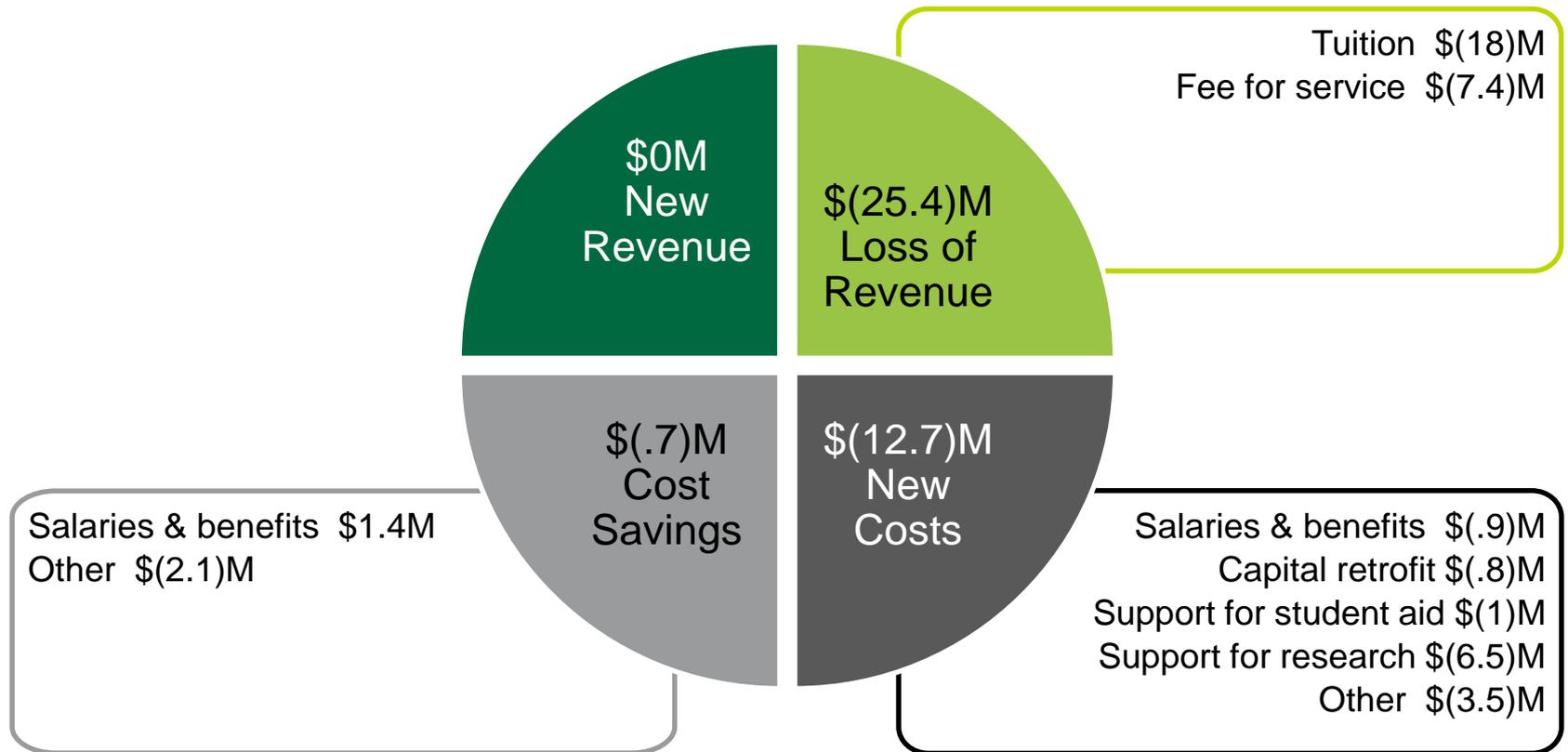
Budgeted COVID Impacts 2020/2021

All Funds: **\$(61.5)M**



Budgeted COVID Impacts 2020/2021

Operating Fund: **\$(38.8)M**



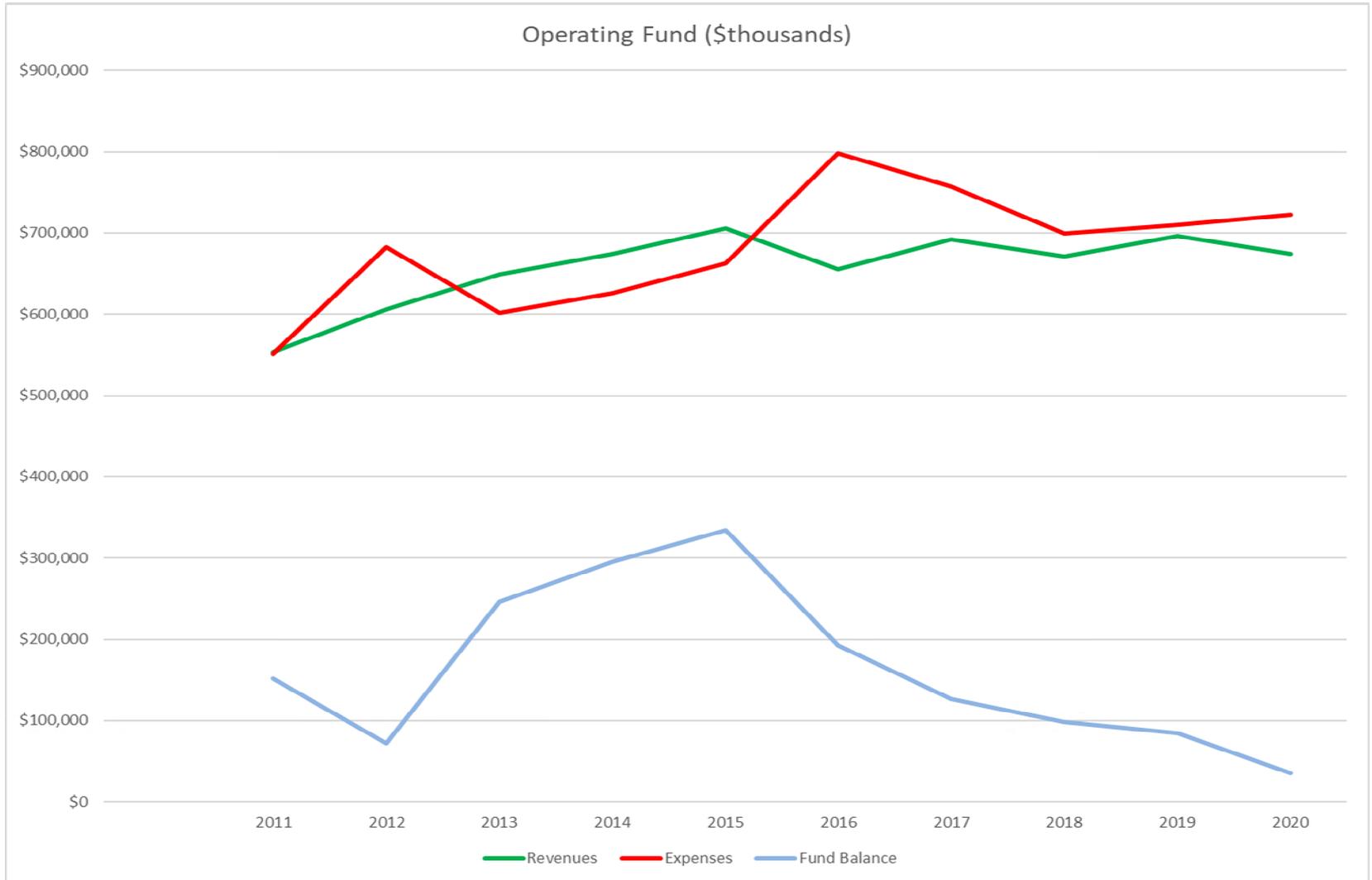
Comprehensive Budget

2020/21 Net Surplus (**Deficit**) By Fund

	Operating	Ancillary	SFA*	Research	Capital	Endowments	TOTAL
 ONGOING	\$10.5M	\$5.8M	\$3.7M	\$6.8M	\$(21.7)M	\$18.4M	\$23.5M
 ONE-TIME COSTS	\$(8.4)M				\$1.0M		\$(7.4)M
 COVID	\$(38.8)M	\$(11.2)M	\$(1.9)M	\$(2.9)M	\$16.6M	\$(23.3)M	\$(61.5)M
 NET	\$(36.7)M	\$(5.4)M	\$1.8M	\$3.9M	\$(4.1)M	\$(4.9)M	\$(45.4)M

*SFA = Student Financial Aid

Operating Fund Trends



USask Financial Sustainability Strategy Short- to Medium-Term (1-5 years)



Questions