



Report of University Council

FOR INFORMATION

Submitted by: Janice Paslawski, Senate Representative at University Council

Date of Meeting: October 17, 2026

Subject: **Report on University Council**

Senate action: For information only.

Background and Summary:

It is an honour to present this report on University Council activities on behalf of Senate. This is my second year as an elected member at large. This is my first term of assignment to University Council. Council is one of three governing bodies of the University of Saskatchewan (USask), responsible for overseeing and directing the institution's academic affairs. Senate representation on Council was updated by Senate selection and assignment at the Spring 2026 Senate meeting: This report covers Council activities from May through September 2026, based on a review of meeting agendas, minutes, and supporting materials.

Role and Function of University Council

University Council plays a central role in academic governance at USask. Its responsibilities include:

- granting academic degrees, diplomas, and certificates
- approving new academic programs and program changes or terminations
- establishing policies governing academic matters, including student evaluation and admissions
- awarding scholarships, bursaries, and prizes
- recommending the establishment of academic units and institutes
- addressing academic integrity and student appeals
- providing advice on institutional priorities, including academic planning and resource allocation

Much of Council's detailed work is conducted through eight standing committees: Academic Programs; Executive; Governance; Nominations; Planning and Priorities; Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work; Scholarships and Awards; and Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources.

Key Decisions and Approvals

Across the reporting period, Council considered and approved a wide range of academic and governance matters. Selected examples:

Academic Program Approvals and Changes

- Approval of new academic programs, certificates and program modifications across multiple colleges, such as Forest Resources Certificate, Graduate Certificate in Improvement Science, Large Animal Veterinary Specialty Internship.
- Changes to admission requirements and program structures in professional and graduate programs such as MSc in Periodontology, BSc Dental Hygiene, BSc Dental Therapy, Doctor of Pharmacy, BSc and PhD in Nursing, PhD in Public Policy and Diploma in Educational Studies.

These changes provide ongoing refinement of program offerings to align with student demand, labour market needs, and institutional priorities.

Program Terminations

Approval of select program closures where enrolment, relevance, or strategic alignment no longer justified continuation.

Governance and Policy Changes

- Revisions of Faculty bylaws in College of Nursing, ESB, College of Agriculture and Bioresources, School of Rehabilitation Science
- Revisions to Council bylaws and committee terms of reference to improve clarity, efficiency, and alignment with changing governance practices
- Two new policies related to curriculum, assessment, and program oversight: course-based assessment and course delivery

Noteworthy is the change on how meetings are conducted: Adoption of the American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure which came into effect on July 1, 2026

Observations

Council remains highly engaged in academic governance. Several themes are consistent across the reporting period:

Academic program quality and responsiveness: Council's academic program decisions reflect ongoing attention to student demand, labour market alignment, and program relevance, including refinements to professional and graduate offerings.

Governance renewal: The adoption of The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure is a significant procedural change for Council and its committees. Orientation to the new rules was incorporated into the September 2026 governance refresher.

Policy stewardship: Council approved and received several policy updates, reflecting active oversight of institutional frameworks governing academic and research activity.

Student engagement: The GSA and USSU remained consistent and active participants in Council deliberations, contributing student perspectives across a range of academic and institutional matters.

Forward Look

As Senate's representative, I will prioritize regular attendance at Council meetings throughout the coming term. I have also identified a concern regarding continuity of Senate representation on Council: the rotation of Senate representatives creates periods of limited institutional memory and reduced Senate visibility at the Council table. I intend to propose governance procedures to support a more effective transition between representatives and will raise this observation with the Senate Engagement Committee for consideration in Senate onboarding provisions.

Conclusion

The May to September 2026 period reflects sustained and consistent Council engagement on academic governance, program development, policy oversight, and governance renewal. Senate members are encouraged to consult publicly available Council agendas and minutes on the [USask governance website](#).