AGENDA ITEM NO: 6.0

Provost’s Report to Council

June 2019

GENERAL REMARKS

Enabling Collaboration and Aligning Structures – Public Health

Since the adoption of the University Plan 2025 and its public launch on October 10, 2018, the university continues to work on many fronts to make this ambitious plan to create “the university the world needs” come to life. All Colleges and Schools have now developed unit Strategic Plans that align with the University Plan. In addition, the important University Research Plan has been adopted. We now are finalizing plans on Teaching and Learning as well as our Indigenization plans among others that will be coming to this body in the Fall 2019.

Since September 2018, I met and discussed with faculty, staff and students of the School of Public Health (SPH) and others to pursue a better model to allow public health graduate programs and research to truly have impact on the populations of Saskatchewan, Canada and the world. It was critical for me to assure that this objective could be achieved by exploring a different process and direction that could lead to the success and impact that we want to achieve here. I consulted broadly in the last 10 months not only with faculty in SPH, CH&E in Medicine, other health science Deans, faculty, and Saskatchewan Health Authority experts among many to explore how this could be done.

Since April 2019, a new path began to emerge that would allow this transition to a more collaborative operational structure to be explored. The object is to allow public health to reach its fully intended impact by not only allowing collaboration to be the key driver but to explore developing a new administrative structure mentioned in our University Plan to allow this to happen. Much work remains to be done, but today I also ask the academic community represented in Council to join me to do this together not only to achieve the highest level that public health should have but to develop a broader framework to allow “boundless collaboration” in other interdisciplinary disciplines. As Provost, I remain strongly committed to exploring this direction.

I met with the Council coordinating committee two weeks ago to describe these details on how we will proceed. In addition, the following details were communicated in an extensive presentation to PPC on June 12th and similarly at a full faculty and staff presentation of SPH on June 13th. The SPH meeting on
June 13th was also attended by senior leadership of USFA, ASPA and CUPE. Finally, I also provided similar details at a PEC breakfast meeting last week.

At both PPC and SPH meetings, I presented the interim restructuring and revitalization plan for public health programming currently in the School of Public Health (SPH) to strongly support collaboration and interdisciplinarity in the health sciences at the U of S. The short-term transition first involves a leadership change, reassignment of staff and faculty, the disestablishment of the School of Public Health as an administrative structure housing the public health programs, and the development of a plan for the new organizational and governance structure(s). No jobs will be lost. The whole process will require a full year to complete enabling many informed discussions in Council and Committees, Senate and ultimately the Board of Governors.

Interim institutional responsibility for the public health programs currently in SPH will be provided by Doug Brothwell, Dean of Dentistry, who will also serve as the interim Executive Director of SPH for the purposes of academic leadership, accreditation, and faculty and staff reporting. Steven Jones, the current Executive Director of SPH will assume the role of Associate Provost, Health Sciences.

The long-term strategy for the redesign and reorganization of these public health programs at USask will be informed by the work of a “new task force”. The task force will be chaired by myself and will have broad membership and experience in the public health sector inside and outside the University. The Nominations committee of Council will be asked to recommend a member as a representative on the task force.

Transition Plan Key Points

- The university’s vision for public health programs currently in SPH remains unchanged, but will be delivered under a different administrative and academic organizational structure.
- The long-term plan is to align and support current public health programs in SPH, new interdisciplinary programs and public health research in a new administrative structure. This new structure will be informed by a task force but finalized thorough discussion and approved by Committees of Council, Council, Senate and Board of Governors.
- The Dean of Dentistry will provide interim leadership as interim executive director of SPH as well as maintaining his duties in Dentistry.
- The current Executive Director of SPH will move to the role of Associate Provost, Health Sciences.
- The transition plan involves aligning the people, programs, and resources with a new structure.
- No faculty or staff will lose their jobs as a result of this change.

I will be pleased to address further detailed questions on this important process to move our University Plan in a strong direction. I will follow up in addressing additional questions at the first meeting of Council in September 2019.
INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

IPA continues to support colleges and schools in implementing their strategic plans. Work is underway to develop an annual process for reporting changes to strategic plans and progress toward strategic goals. A key outcome of this process will be the ongoing alignment of resources (people, capital, technological, financial) to support strategic priorities. IPA is working closely with the Office of Financial Strategy to ensure that strategic plan updates and multi-year financial planning can be completed simultaneously, with support provided to colleges and schools from those offices. Strengthening the connection between planning and resource allocation allows us to more effectively monitor and advance our progress toward the goals of the University Plan 2025.

In addition, IPA is continuing work to identify processes and metrics that will be used to assess progress on the University Plan. The intent is to determine the appropriate metrics and information to indicate progress on the guideposts associated with each goal in the University Plan. Reporting on metrics will provide valuable insights to a variety of stakeholders and will be a key resource for unit leaders as they monitor and adjust their strategic plans. Consultations with senior leaders about proposed metrics will continue over the next few months as we work to determine how best to measure the strategic priorities outlined in the plan. I will provide an update to Council on our work in this area in the Fall.

COLLEGE AND SCHOOL UPDATES

Edwards School of Business

Edwards Master of Science in Marketing student, Stephanie Pankiw, presented her research at the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly on May 7. Pankiw has been working with Regina-based jewelry company Hillberg & Berk on how to include more effective positive, feminist messages in their advertising as part of the company’s mission to empower women through jewelry “one sparkle at a time.” Funding for the partnership came from Mitacs’ research internship program.

Five undergraduate Edwards students (Ryssa Alarcon, Karli Muench, Carlee Snow, Morgan Kalk, and Maddison Sutor) entered the SaskRush University Marketing Challenge and won $5000 cash for their marketing efforts. The team was assigned to market a Sask Rush game through social media, direct marketing, sponsorship/partnership, and a commercial ad.

College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

College of Graduate & Postdoctoral studies recent scholarship/awards highlights:

Toxicology researcher Jonathan Challis and sociology researcher Holly McKenzie were each awarded Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships worth $140,000 over two years. Challis will identify new contaminants that may affect water sources, including in Indigenous communities. McKenzie will study how therapy dogs can help women’s well-being.

Adam McInnes, PhD candidate, Biomedical Engineering has been awarded a Vanier Scholarship worth $150,000 to develop a new gel to promote tissue growth for 3D printing of artificial organs that may one day be used for transplants.
The Misiwêskamik International Postdoctoral Fellowship, made available through ‘Bring the World to Saskatchewan’ International Blueprint funding is the first of its kind of postdoctoral fellowships for the University of Saskatchewan. This year a total of $132,000 was awarded to:

- **Dr Jane Alison Green**, from Hamilton, New Zealand, Dept. of Indigenous Studies will receive a 2 year fellowship in the signature area of Indigenous Peoples.
- **Dr. Xin Feng**, from Foshan, China, Dept. of Animal and Poultry Science will receive a 1 year fellowship in the signature area of Food and Bioproducts for a Sustainable Future

Indigenous Graduate Leadership Awards were created through funding made available by the Provost’s Committee on Integrated Planning. These awards provide a baseline award plus tuition (Master’s $16,000 plus tuition for 2 years/PhD $20,000 plus tuition for 4 years). The purpose of these awards is to provide dedicated funding, encouraging Indigenous students to attend graduate school. Selection criteria include demonstrated academic excellence and leadership with a personal commitment to improving their communities.

Congratulations to **Cindy Deschenes**, PhD candidate in Health Sciences and **Indiana Best**, Masters Student in Public Health as this year’s awardees.

For the first recipient of the degree since 2012, the CGPS is awarding an earned Doctor of Science degree to **Dr. Digvir S. Jayas**, alumni of the University of Saskatchewan and currently the Vice-President Research and International at the University of Manitoba. Jayas is recognized around the world for his contributions to science and is the leading expert on grain storage and handling in the world.

**University Library**

As a direct result of the unsustainable rising costs of subscriptions set by publishers, in addition to the fluctuating value of the Canadian dollar and the monopolization of publishing companies, the University Library is facing growing constraints to its collections budget. As such, we are forced to evaluate our e-resource subscriptions in an effort to maintain a balanced budget. Over the past three months, Library representatives have visited faculty councils, the GSA Council, and RSAW to share an overview of our anticipated collections reductions for the 2019/20 fiscal year. We have updated the Balancing the Collections Budget webpage to reflect the most current information and address the questions we heard most often during our stakeholder conversations. We will continue to communicate our plans throughout the summer and into the fall term.

Following the announcement in November 2018 of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan’s consolidation to a single location in Regina, including the closure of the Saskatoon office, the University Library worked with the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan to examine collections of Saskatoon-based and/or University-based interest. This has resulted in transfers of several notable collections to the University Library from the Provincial Archives, including:

- the Neil Richards fonds and related LGBTQ archival collections,
- the papers of USask faculty including A.S. Morton, G.W. Simpson, Kenneth Buckley, and W.A.S Sarjeant,
- collections from Saskatoon community and arts organizations including the Saskatoon Gateway Players.

Some records have been transferred from the University Library to the Provincial Archives, primarily the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool fonds. Both institutions had extensive material donated by the Wheat Pool; we took this opportunity to reunite the collections and facilitate researcher access in a single location. The Neil Richards materials and related collections are now on site in University Archives and Special Collections. Other collections will be transferred in the coming months. Please contact ua.sc@usask.ca to enquire about the location and availability of specific collections.