As I submit this May report to University Council, I note we are in our ninth week of working and delivering classes remotely. I want to acknowledge how thoughtful, responsive, and resilient members of our campus community – students, faculty, and staff - have been during these uncertain times. This is especially pertinent given the recent completion of remote exam delivery. I want to thank all members who both transitioned to remote course delivery and subsequently delivered exams in a remote setting. This is no easy feat and I truly commend you for your ability to pivot and adapt through this very trying period.

Since my last report in April, I would like to highlight a few important updates:

- **Tuition** - The next several months are going to be challenging for many families facing difficult financial decisions as a result of the pandemic. Knowing that tuition is a significant investment for students, we have decided to freeze our tuition rates on the majority of our programs for the upcoming year. Our hope is that by maintaining tuition at the current rates for the fall and winter terms, we can reduce some financial pressures for many students and their families. Even with tuition rates remaining unchanged, we are staying focused on program and delivery enhancements to ensure that students continue to receive a world class education at the University of Saskatchewan. The method of program delivery this fall and winter — whether in-class, remotely or a blend of both—will not change the high quality and value of a USask degree.

- **Fall Planning** - The immense planning effort continues to determine how this upcoming academic year looks. This is a complex and multi-layered initiative, knowing that it will not be business as usual. Being thoughtful, deliberate and diligent will help us get this right, based on guidance from the provincial government and our healthcare professionals. A Pandemic Recovery Team (PRT) has recently been formed, consisting of cross-campus representatives, with the mandate to lead the planning for September, best positioning USask to deliver successfully on our academic and research missions for students during these extraordinary times. The spring term (already underway) and the upcoming summer term are both being delivered remotely. We are now planning for a primarily remote approach to program delivery this fall. The planned September delivery model will combine primarily remote online learning, with limited classroom, laboratory, clinical, and physical instruction only where warranted and where circumstances permit, in consultation with public health and Saskatchewan’s Chief Medical Health Officer. This direction reflects comprehensive analysis and planning work done at the university over the months since the emergence of COVID-19, and is based on current pandemic knowledge and projections. The planned direction also provides the programming flexibility needed to manage the potential risks while ensuring the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. We hope this will help our students and faculty in starting to plan their fall. The health and safety of our students and staff will be the priority as we remain focused on delivering our world class academic programming and research.
• **2020 Convocation** - For the Class of 2020, we have announced that our spring convocation ceremonies will be postponed. From the moment the postponement was officially announced, we have been working hard to make new plans to honour our graduating students. Although we are prevented from celebrating their achievements in person this June, they will be receiving their parchments and we will celebrate in other ways beginning later this month. At some point in the future, we do plan to invite all our Class of 2020 graduates back to campus to have the opportunity to cross the convocation stage in person, celebrating their accomplishments with their families and friends.

Once again, I am grateful for your continued support and flexibility during this most challenging time in our university’s history. While COVID-19 has created tremendous operational and financial challenges for us in delivering on our academic and research mission, I have great confidence in the decisions we are making to emerge as an even stronger university in the post-pandemic period.

**USask Indigenous health leader appointed to national COVID-19 Immunity Task Force**

I would like to congratulate USask Indigenous health research leader, Dr. Carrie Bourassa, for her recent appointment to the federal COVID-19 Immunity Task Force as the Indigenous Engagement Lead. This national group, which brings together 15 prominent leaders with relevant university, hospital and public health expertise, will oversee efforts to measure the scope and scale of SARS-CoV-2 immunity across Canada. As part of a recently announced $350 million dollar project to expand national testing and modelling, this two year initiative will aim to provide decision makers with the best information to manage the pandemic and assist with getting people back to work.

**Welcoming Dr. Melissa Just to the role of Interim Provost and VP Academic**

On May 1, Dr. Melissa Just began her tenure as Interim Provost and VP Academic. She will work closely with the current provost and vice-president academic, Tony Vannelli, until June 30th, at which time Tony will step down and Melissa will assume full responsibility in the interim role. Melissa joined USask as dean of the University Library in February 2017. She has demonstrated exceptional leadership in that time, realigning library resources to best meet the ever-evolving needs of faculty and students in an academic area that changes quickly and constantly, while also leading the development of the library’s master plan. An international search for our next provost and vice-president academic has begun and I will provide more information on the progress of that search as it is available. Please join me in congratulating and welcoming Melissa to this new position.