GENERAL REMARKS

First and foremost, I want to continue to wish the University of Saskatchewan community of students, faculty and staff the best of health as we continue to manage a historic pandemic that the entire world is fighting with courage, dignity and integrity. Again, I want to add to the global applause for health sector warriors – doctors, nurses, public health officials and more that are fighting this virus to protect each and every one of us as well as the entire worldwide population.

I want to especially thank the entire faculty and staff that delivered the end of the Winter term remotely and spectacularly with only a few days’ notice along with huge efforts of our students and researchers that worked with this new mode of program delivery during a stressful and uncertain time. The stories of imagination and encouragement that allowed all of us to continue to teach and learn remains inspirational.

At this time, the emerging plans remain to deliver the majority of Spring, Summer and especially the large Fall terms remotely or online. More formal details will be announced by late May/early June. Remote delivery of programs is occurring across North America. Accredited health sciences’ programs across the spectrum do require more “hands on” teaching and learning with patients. These programs will be monitored carefully by both academic and health officials to assure that everyone’s health is protected. We will work with the Chief Medical Officer, Public Health and SHA officials to assure that our students, faculty and staff remain safe and healthy to a “slow” re-opening of the province, country and campus. The newly created university Pandemic Response Team (PRT) will be providing proper protocol that we will follow with government Health officials with the number one focus being to protect everyone’s health in these times.

To help students at this time, we have maintained tuition for 2020-21 at the same levels as 2019-20 (except for a few programs that had tuition announced earlier). Please see the report from the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment that follows. We realize the economic impact of the pandemic on students as well as their families during this crisis. We continue to provide critical Emergency funding to many students in need that has increased dramatically in the past two months. We will continue to provide additional support as we progress into the Fall term. Along with other fiscal supports provided by many levels of government, we will support undergraduate and graduate students that need this help to continue their education

I will provide additional updates as needed before my June Report to Council. Be strong and stay well for yourselves and others.
INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

**Tuition Update**
The University of Saskatchewan has reviewed and revised its original tuition plans for the 2020/21 academic year. Due to the impacts of COVID-19 on students, USask is implementing a tuition freeze for 2020/21 for most of its programs. The tuition announcement was made on May 7, 2020.

International differential tuition multipliers will remain unchanged at 2.73 for undergraduate students and 1.58 for graduate students and are projected to remain below most U15 comparators. Tuition rates for three colleges—Western College of Veterinary Medicine, College of Dentistry, and College of Law—will see tuition increases ranging from 3 to 15%. These tuition increases have been previously announced following broad consultation and reflect the specific needs of these respective programs.

We know tuition is a significant investment for students, and we hope that by maintaining tuition levels at their current 2019/20 rates in most of our programs for the upcoming year, current financial pressures felt by students and their families may be reduced. Even as tuition rates remain unchanged, we remain focused on program and delivery enhancements to ensure that our students receive a rich and rigorous education that will set them up for success following graduation. The method of program delivery—whether in-class, remote, or a blend of both—does not change the high quality and exceptional value of a USask degree.

To assist with affordability and accessibility, the University of Saskatchewan will continue to provide over $70 million annually in financial aid, through scholarships, bursaries, and tuition credits that remain in place. Additionally, as a further response to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have already provided payments to students in excess of $925,000 from the Emergency Student Fund, a fund that will continue to support students in crisis; have invested $175,000 to support graduate students in assistantships; and suspended late fees for tuition payments until August.

We understand that there are also questions about fees for the upcoming year. Student fees are assessed to maintain important services and supports, most of which continue to be used by students regardless of how classes are delivered. Student fees for 2020/21 are still under consideration and will be announced at a later date. USask collects these fees on behalf of a variety of partners, including the USSU and GSA, and we are working with them to determine their services and fee levels for the upcoming year.

**Update on University Rankings**
As part of my regular updates to you on university rankings, I wanted to provide some information on the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings that were released on April 22, 2020. Like other university rankings, this initiative uses a set of criteria to provide a global ranking of universities. However, it is unique in that it measures the success of universities across the world in advancing the United Nations’ 17 Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs). The University of Saskatchewan received an overall ranking of 96 in the world; a top 100 outcome among the 766 universities that were ranked overall.

In addition to the overall ranking, THE also provided rankings in each of the 17 SDGs. Universities had the option of participating in any of the SDGs in order to be ranked in the specific goal areas. Our university participated in 11 SDGs and received two top 20 rankings, 4th in SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and 12th in SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing). There were four other outcomes in the top 100 including 38th in SDG 14 (Life Below Water), a tie for
56th in SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 67th in SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institution), and a tie for 79th in SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). In addition, placements in the 101-200 range were received in SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Finally, the lowest ranking received was in the 201-300 range in SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals). Given that sustainability is one of the four principles of our strategic plan, we will continue to pay close attention to these ranking results moving forward.


COLLEGE AND SCHOOL UPDATES

University Library
On Monday, May 11, a digital archive was launched to document life in Saskatchewan during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Community Archive is a partnership between USask faculty in the Department of History and the University Library. As a community-driven initiative, the COVID-19 Community Archive invites submissions from Saskatchewan residents that chronicle individual or collective experiences during the global health crisis. The project team will also use web archiving, interviews, and other initiatives to gather other documentation, such as materials related to the local public discourse (e.g., news releases, policy changes, school closures) as well as science during COVID-19 (e.g., VIDO-InterVac response, strategic initiatives, research delays). This archive will provide valuable source material for researchers studying how the COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the university and the province at large. Content can be viewed and submitted online at https://covid19archive.usask.ca/.