AGENDA ITEM NO: 12.1

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY: Stephen Urquhart, chair
Governance Committee

DATE OF MEETING: November 21, 2019

SUBJECT: Proposed dissolution of the International Activities Committee of Council

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended that Council authorize the dissolution of the International Activities Committee of Council, effective immediately.

PURPOSE:

In November of 2018, the chair of the International Activities Committee (IAC) advised the chair of the Governance Committee that the IAC had concluded that the committee should be dissolved. The Governance Committee sought the assistance of the Co-ordinating Committee, which asked the standing committees of Council to review their terms of reference, with a view to distributing responsibility for activities related to internationalization through all Council committees that might play a role. The dissolution of the IAC is one component of this changed model; in a companion request for decision, Council will be asked to approve amendments to the terms of reference of a number of committees.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Both the University Plan and the International Blueprint for Action adopted in the fall of 2018 emphasize that internationalization continues to be a priority for the University of Saskatchewan. Some years ago, Council decided its role in the international activities of the university should be carried out through a standing committee, the IAC. Rather than having this responsibility rest with one committee, the Governance Committee is now recommending the adoption of a different model that would see the goal of internationalization considered by all relevant committees when doing their work.
In October 2018, a working group of the IAC of Council completed a report on the strategic directions of the IAC (attachment 1). Dr. Keith Walker chaired the working group, which conducted its work from October 2017-October 2018. Upon receipt of the findings, and with careful consideration, the committee recommended that the IAC be dissolved. The IAC membership decided by electronic vote on November 21, 2018 to recommend to Council the dissolution of the IAC.

In consultation with the standing committees of Council, and with the assistance of the Co-ordinating Committee, the Governance Committee has overseen a process in which revisions have been proposed to the terms of reference of the Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC), the Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee (RSAW), the Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee (TLARC) and the Academic Programs Committee (APC), with a view to reminding these committees that the priority the university attaches to internationalization should be taken into account in their work. These revised terms of reference are the subject of a separate motion being put before Council for consideration.

With these revisions completed, the Governance Committee is recommending that the IAC be dissolved.

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED:

Council will be asked at the November 21, 2019 meeting to approve revised terms of reference for PPC, RSAW, TLARC and APC.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. IAC Strategic directions working group report, dated October 16, 2018
2. IAC Memo to the Governance Committee, dated November 28, 2018
Strategic Directions Working Group
A Consensus Report
International Activities Committee of University Council
October 16th, 2018

Members: Naheda Sahtout (GSA President), Jim Lee (Executive Director, International), Alison Pickrell (Assistant Vice-Provost, Strategic Enrolment Management), Patti McDougall (Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning and Student Experience), and Keith Walker (Working Group Lead)

Mandate of ad hoc Working Group:

To provide a “strategic directions report” to IAC (International Activities Committee).

Background:

Members met on a number of occasions from February to May 2018, and subsequently through e-mail exchanges. The group considered the fiduciary, generative and strategic functions of IAC and reviewed IAC Terms of Reference (ToR). Considerations and conversations included:

- Reviewing possible amendments to wording and specific elements of current terms of reference;
- Considering ways to enhance functioning, operations and ameliorate vulnerabilities of IAC (e.g., how to avoid distraction, goal displacement, redundant function and churning);
- Reviewing composition of Committee;
- Reflecting on interface with other units on campus;
- Testing IAC function and alignment with University Council functions (academic interests); and
- Asking questions about existence, mission, structure, and resources for IAC.

Comment:

The Working Group acknowledged the work of IAC on revisions to international awards, partnering to enhance international presence on website, periodic offering of input/consultation/vetting on various internationally-related initiatives, and for providing input into the “Connecting with the World” The International Blueprint for Action 2025 – A Vision for a Globally Significant University. The Working Group had dialogue on enhancing functions, wondering about composition of IAC, and considering how terms of reference might be adjusted to better align with University Council functions and new administrative structures and supports. The Working Group was eventually drawn back to questions of
the Committee’s existence and mission.

Outcomes:

On May 3rd, we concluded that given the maturation of administrative and support functions for internationalization at the University of Saskatchewan, the seven terms of reference are redundant to tasks already assigned, or are ambiguous and lend themselves to busy-work and individual/situational agendas or belong with other committees of University Council. We further concluded that there were three options for Working Group to consider in reporting to IAC:

a. **Revise/Reframe**: IAC to become “something different” from current Committee via “tinkering” with ToR (terms of reference)
b. **Reset/Re-imagine**: IAC to be overhauled to meet current University Council needs through a process of significant change of mandate
c. **Resign/Release/Retire**: Recommend to IAC (and through IAC to University Council) that as currently set up, IAC is no longer relevant and has no functions that aren’t taken care of by other administrative or faculty roles.

The Working Group decided to recommend the third option.

Warrants for Conclusion

Prior to considering questions of existence or mission of IAC, the Working Group assessed each of the ToR (see Table One)

As members went through each element of the ToR, it became evident that these terms were problematic. In the end, the weaknesses of elements and the whole ToR led to four overlapping observations:

1. The IAC functions envisioned and expressed in the ToR have been replaced by academic units and administrative roles, structures, authority and functions.
2. IAC is not well-positioned to be efficacious nor constructive in operationalizing the ToR
3. A number of the ToR elements have become formally assigned to and taken care of by other Units (See Table Two)

A number of the functions have been professionalized at University and Unit levels. If our assessment of ToR is accurate, then the existence of IAC, with no meaningful and useful functions ought be to re-evaluated. We were not able to conceive of an effective replacement set of ToR for IAC. **This led us to the recommendation that IAC be retired as a committee of University Council.**

One of the consequences of this recommendation, if ultimately affirmed by IAC and University Council, is related to the sufficiency of faculty governance in the realm of
internationalization, international activities, and international policy on campus. In other words, are there sufficient means for faculty to provide input and comments related to the international domain at and through university, college/school, and unit levels? Further, the membership of IAC has also provided one means for the voices of undergraduate and graduate student representatives, and so this recommendation affords the opportunity to consider alternative ways and means for their voices to be represented in matters related to international activities and policies. The While the Working Group did not see fit to offer assessment or remedy for these risks of reduced engagement, it was deemed important to raise the issue.
### Table One

**IAC Terms of Reference, Themes and Assessment**

The purpose of this table is to reflect some of the dialogue undertaken by Working Group to see the appropriateness and relevance of ToR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpretation of Themes</th>
<th>Terms of Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Issue Identification</td>
<td>Recommend to Council on issues relating to international activities at the University</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dialogue:</strong> Problem focused, policing, what sources (beyond Committee Members), ambiguous, gravity-funnel function, mediating function, slippery slope and antenna or watch-dog role. There is or could be a tendency to use IAC to lobby for particular interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the IAC as presently constituted in the best position to fulfill this ToR? Answer = “No”</td>
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<td>2. Policy &amp; Regulation Review</td>
<td>Reviewing policies and regulations relating to international activities at the University, and reporting observations and issues to Council</td>
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<td><strong>Dialogue:</strong> Misplaced casuistry (tendency to deal with detailed cases and offer policy reactions to these), overlap with Governance Committee of Council, what would/might the agenda look like for this review (central, unit by unit, particular type of policies and regulations)? What would Council do with report? Is this a functionally wise ToR? Answer = “No”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Internal Promotion</td>
<td>Promoting programs and curricula that provide an international perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dialogue:</strong> Too detailed and administrative for a committee of University Council, to what end and what might advice provide that is not already provided? Example cited of double degrees but this might best be handled by other committees of University Council and promotion is more typically seen as function of academic or administrative units with budget resources and well-equipped processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Review &amp; Advice</td>
<td>Reviewing and providing advice on frameworks, procedures and agreements with foreign institutions to relevant university officers, the Planning and Priorities Committee, the Academic Programs Committee and/or other Council Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dialogue:</strong> This set of responsibilities is already assigned to administrative units and International Office. See comments on first terms of reference and Table 2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. External Promoting &amp; Fostering</td>
<td>Promoting interactions with university and educational/research institutions outside Canada, to foster new opportunities for University of Saskatchewan stakeholders in teaching, learning and research</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dialogue:</strong> Already assigned to International Operations Committee (administrative), which is a mediating structure for these activities. Some of this is Unit and individual research mediated. See Table 2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Receiving, Reviewing, Reporting and Conveying</td>
<td>Receiving, reviewing and reporting to Council reports on matters relating to international student, research and alumni activities from the international units of the</td>
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University, as well as sharing information with and forwarding reports to other appropriate bodies at the University.

**Dialogue:** This is a middle-role (broker function) where Committee could pick and choose, be the messenger and “get into the weeds” – the functions in this terms of reference are with Units and International Office functions. See Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Delegation of Representatives</th>
<th>Designating individuals to act as representatives of the Committee on any other bodies when requested, where such representation is deemed by the Committee to be beneficial.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dialogue:</strong></td>
<td>Don’t need a Committee for this function; other committees of University Council (including Nominations Committee) can look after this.</td>
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**Table Two**

**IAC Terms of Reference in Relation to Other Units**  
The purpose of this table is to provide evidence for the Working Group Claim that IAC ToR are now more appropriately taken care of by other units on campus (at both University and Academic Unit levels)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IAC Terms of Reference</th>
<th>Other Units (primary, secondary, tertiary)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommend to Council on issues relating to international activities at the University</td>
<td>Overall responsibility of the international portfolio now falls to the Provost/Vice-President Academic and Vice-President Research, who both provide reports to Council. Oversight of international activities is provided by the International Steering Team consisting of the Vice-Provost (Teaching, Learning, and Student Experience), Dean (College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies), Associate Vice-President (Research), and Associate Vice-President (Alumni Relations).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Reviewing policies and regulations relating to international activities at the University, and reporting observations and issues to Council | The International Operations Committee has been created to plan and coordinate the seamless delivery of international activities, initiatives and programs at the University of Saskatchewan. It meets on a monthly basis, members of the International Steering Team are part of the committee, and it is chaired by the Executive Director (International).  
As a Designated Learning Institution (IRCC), the U of S has a responsibility to adhere to the Province’s DLI framework in order to maintain its status to enroll international students. An oversight team has been established, reporting through the Assistant Vice-Provost, SEM and Dean, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, to ensure policies and practices related to international students are up to date and communicated.  
Development, approval and administration of university policies relating to international activities (teaching & learning, student affairs, research & scholarly activities, operations & administration, safety and risk, and advancement) follow established procedures outlined on the University Secretary’s website:  
http://policies.usask.ca/ |
| Promoting programs and curricula that provide an international perspective | A key objective in the International Blueprint for Action is internationalizing learning experiences. There are several objectives including:  
1. Increasing study abroad engagement. |
2. Enhancing international & cross cultural perspective in content and learning in the curriculum
3. Optimizing participation in co-curricular activities that are inclusive and foster intercultural understanding

Primary responsibility for actioning this pillar lies with the Teaching, Learning and Student Experience portfolio with leadership of key administrative units such as the International Student & Study Abroad Centre, and the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching & Learning. Colleges and schools are formalizing their thinking in this area through the strategic planning process and blueprint projects. Funding is being made available to support these priorities. The Provost / Vice-President (Academic) and Vice-President (Research) will be keeping tabs on the progress of these goals.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Reviewing and providing advice on frameworks, procedures and agreements with foreign institutions to relevant university officers, the Planning and Priorities Committee, the Academic Programs Committee and/or other Council Committees</th>
<th>The International Partnerships Team in the International Research and Partnerships Office (IRPO) now falls under the direct leadership of the Executive Director (International). Alongside faculty and colleges, this team now advises, facilitates, and negotiates the development of all academic agreements (outside of research contracts) involving international partners.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting interactions with university and educational/research institutions outside Canada, to foster new opportunities for University of Saskatchewan stakeholders in teaching, learning and research</td>
<td>It is standard practice and there are common pathways for international opportunities to be identified directly from the work of faculty members, Colleges, and the international networks they develop and maintain. Stemming (in large part, though not exclusively) from the work and direction of faculty and colleges, the International Research and Partnerships Office (IRPO), Teaching, Learning, and Student Experience (TLSE) and other units promote and facilitate collaborative international opportunities in teaching, research, and the student experience involving international partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving, reviewing and reporting to Council reports on matters relating to international student, research and alumni activities from the international units of the University, as well as sharing information with and forwarding reports to other appropriate bodies at the University.</td>
<td>Information related to international students and international research activities is presented regularly to Council through reports provided by the Provost/Vice-President (Academic) and/or Vice-President (Research). International student related data needs are facilitated and coordinated through the Strategic Enrolment Intelligence Team, reporting to the Vice Provost, TLSE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Institutional Planning and Assessment office oversees university-level internationalization metrics and external reporting related to internationalization such as international rankings.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Designating individuals to act as representatives of the Committee on any other bodies when requested, where such representation is deemed by the Committee to be beneficial.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Council committees may need informed perspectives related to internationalization related topics. This could be obtained through International Operations Committee members and/or members of the International Steering Team (described above).</td>
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<tr>
<td>As indicated, University Council, College/School Faculties, and Administrative units may see fit to consider opportunities and gaps with respect to recruitment of faculty and student representation on committees, task forces or other groups to provide appropriate faculty and student engagement in governance, policy making, leadership and decision making in the international domain.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
To: Jay Wilson, Chair, Governance Committee of Council
From: Paul Orlowski, Chair, International Activities Committee of Council
cc: Jacquie Thomarat; Roxanne Craig
Date: November 28, 2018
Re: Dissolution of the International Activities Committee of Council

Dear Jay,

The International Activities Committee of Council (IACC) conducted an electronic ballot vote to bring forth a recommendation to Council to dissolve the committee. The vote was carried.

Background: the IACC has been discussing strategic directions of the committee for the past few years, as they felt the committee had become too operational rather than offering strategic guidance to Council. In the fall of 2017 a working group (Strategic Directions, chaired by Keith Walker) was created to develop a plan for the IACC to become a more strategic group for Council on matters of international. The Strategic Directions final report (attached), along with a recommendation to dissolve the committee, was presented to the membership at the October 17, 2018 meeting. Following a lengthy discussion the members agreed to consider the report and the recommendation to Council of dissolution and would vote on the matter at the November meeting. The vote was carried. It was felt that the oversight of international activities at the U of S was being addressed in various ways across campus especially with creation of the new International Blueprint, overseen by the International Operations Committee under the direction of Patricia McDougall, Trever Crowe, and Guy Larocque.

Sincerely,
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