GENERAL REMARKS

With the University of Saskatchewan’s University Plan 2025 now in place, there are many key areas in interdisciplinary and collaborative academic programming and research that could be revitalized under a new structure to realize their full impact. One such opportunity is to reshape the original mission of public health and public health programs at this university under a different interdisciplinary model. By Spring 2020, we are aiming to find the right academic governance and administrative structure(s) to achieve this new direction. At the October 17, 2019 Council meeting we are discussing a Notice of Motion to achieve this vision.

The university’s commitment to public health has evolved and matured to the point where a new academic administrative structure is needed. It has become clear that a stand-alone unit; i.e., the School of Public Health (SPH), is no longer the appropriate conduit to achieve our bold ambitions for public health programming and interdisciplinarity. Therefore, the disestablishment of SPH is recommended, but the academic programs will be maintained and strengthened.

More important, a task force has been established to engage with the key stakeholders in public health on and off the campus and to recommend a new structure to allow public health academic programs and research to indeed achieve its original mission. It is the “transition journey and process” that we are embarking on that will be the key to public health having the impact on health care in this province, country and internationally. This recommendation points to the difficulties and shortcomings in establishing and implementing the school as initially envisioned, however it also speaks to the significant accomplishments made in public health programming across the campus. The College of Dentistry has interim institutional responsibility for public health programs currently housed in SPH.

The provost’s office is leading the development of this transition plan with careful consideration including financial analysis, leadership transitions, change management, analysis of previous reviews of SPH, analysis of previous closures of units on campus, and establishment of a Public Health Task Force. Extensive consultation has been conducted with individual faculty, staff, University Council and Council committees, and senior leaders.

It will be key for me to assure that this transition process done by the Public Health Task Force be transparent to receive input from many stakeholders, reporting to Committees of Council as well as Council at key times until a final report is discussed in the Spring 2020.
VICE-PROVOST, TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Orientation took place on September 3 and we saw a growth in student participation. This year 2,893 students attended Orientation. It’s interesting to note that our attendance record was nearly 100%, meaning that almost every student that signed-up for Orientation actually took part in the day. Thanks to our communicators and college partners for contributing to this positive change.

Orientation is our major on-campus welcome event. It’s oriented towards students who are starting their USask experience or starting a new path in a different college or program. Students began the day with their college, enjoyed lunch, had a welcome and induction event in the PAC, and then explored many of the things our campus has to offer at the Campus Expo.

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

Last year at this time I reported that we were working towards closer alignment between strategic planning, resource allocation, budgeting and assessment. We are continuing progress on this with our work to update our strategic and financial plans by taking a multi-year approach to both activities (in an attempt to ensure that our resources are supporting our priorities year over year). College and school plan updates were received at the beginning of October and the Offices of IPA and Financial Strategy are reviewing the submissions and continuing to engage with colleges, schools, and support centres about the information and processes as they relate to resource allocation for 2020-21.

A key component of the resource allocation process is the TABBS model. As such, we have also been working to revise the model to better reflect our university’s priorities and activities. Beginning this year, TABBS will account for teaching, research, and space utilization that is collaborative in nature to ensure that our interdisciplinary activities are acknowledged. The model results will be finalized in October and used as an input (along with the updated strategic and financial plans) in the resource allocation decisions for the upcoming year. These decisions will be communicated to colleges and schools in early December and will be reflected in the detailed budget submitted to the Board of Governors in March 2020.

COLLEGE AND SCHOOL UPDATES

College of Education

On Wednesday, September 18, the College of Education hosted its annual Pinning Ceremony for third-year B.Ed. students to signify their transition from student to teacher candidate. The event was attended by over 600 people, with 200 students and alumni receiving their pins. Dignitaries included The Honourable Gordon Wyant, Deputy Premier and Minister of Education, Chief Mark Arcand of the Saskatoon Tribal Council, executive leaders from school divisions and partner agencies, and university leaders. Along with greetings from dignitaries, the three presidents of the college’s students’ societies shared words of congratulations and inspiration with their peers.

On Saturday, September 21, the College of Education celebrated SUNTEP and ITEP alumni during Alumni Weekend FestiBowl with an Indigenous Culture and Language Festival. The event closely aligns with the university’s 2025 mission and engagement priorities and was held in honour of the United Nations Declaration
of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages. The college and University Relations partnered to hold a Pipe Ceremony on Thursday, September 19 to start Alumni Weekend festivities in a good way.

As part of its strategic priorities to intensify research and discovery, the College of Education was pleased to formally announce a $1 million gift from Jane and Ron Graham on Friday, October 4. This gift supports the development of the School for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and will have a significant impact on learning and discovery within and across our diverse communities.