

## Report on Activities in the 20 Commitments between Jan-June 2009

This summary presents an overview of activities taking place in the 20 commitments since the commitment leader process began in May 2008, with emphasis on recent activities that have taken place between January and June 2009. This update builds on the previous commitment update from December 2008, and complements the 2008-09 progress report for the Second Integrated Plan, which is available at [www.usask.ca/reporting/integrated\\_plan\\_reports/microsites/0809\\_progress\\_report](http://www.usask.ca/reporting/integrated_plan_reports/microsites/0809_progress_report). The table below shows the collective progress to date in the 20 commitments:

### Progress to date

Activity	Status
Commitment leaders named for each of the 20 commitments	☑
Working groups established and meetings held	☑ Meetings will continue over cycle
Commitment leaders networked together and with campus groups	☑ Activity will continue over cycle
Funding provided to support early initiatives from Academic Priorities Fund	→ Some initiatives funded in 2008-09; additional funding will continue over cycle
Work plans developed, or in development	→
Surveys, gap analysis and environmental scanning	→
Identifying priority initiatives for second planning cycle	→

☑ Complete → In progress or ongoing

More specifically, commitment leaders and their working groups have been:

- forming working groups, reference groups, and/or subcommittees and developing terms of reference; each looks different depending on what works best for that commitment
- creating missions, visions, definitions
- engaging in “big picture” discussions about their commitment area, including
  - driving forces or opportunities
  - challenges and barriers
  - most important areas/activities that need to be addressed in the commitment area in this planning cycle
  - immediate leverage opportunities (“quick wins”)
- identifying priorities and developing or beginning to implement workplans
- conducting research projects, environmental scanning, landscape reviews
- seeking experts in their area or reviewing literature
- seeking opportunities for commitments to work with one another
- providing advice to other commitments where overlap occurs and considering ways their work will support the other commitments
- consulting with and providing advice to various committees and councils on campus about their commitment area
- developing initiatives and PCIP proposals for APF funding

Below is summary of accomplishments as well as emerging ideas and projects as of June 2009 (including those reported in December 2008). **This is still a preliminary list, not a comprehensive or final one. For more information, please talk to the commitment leader(s) directly.**

## Emerging Ideas and Initiatives from the Commitments

### **The Teacher – Learner Experience, Jim Greer**

*Ideas/projects include:* improving teaching courses for graduate students; improving recognition and rewards for good teaching; better tracking of merits awarded for good teaching; and better use of student evaluations and show evidence of teaching improvement because of feedback. Read their blog

<http://blogs.usask.ca/teacherlearnerblog/>

### **Innovations in Programs, Ernie Barber**

*Ideas/projects include:* contributing the development of an enrolment management strategy for the University of Saskatchewan; community service and experiential learning and research; and exploring past academic program change or development and telling the story of how successful ones have happened, from idea to implementation. Focus will be on those major in scope, new or that cross multiple colleges.

### **Diverse Body of Students, Dave Hannah**

*Ideas/projects include:* review of admissions process for new students; improved internal process so multiple units involved in student admission and communication are working together better; working with Academics Group to collect and analyze data from the Undergraduate and Graduate Acceptance Declined Student Surveys; contributing to a positioning exercise for the University of Saskatchewan with a consultant hired through an RFP process; and a review of all U of S scholarships and financial aid.

### **Recruitment Strategies and Initiatives, Tom Steele & Tonya Wirchenko (Susan Bens on mat leave)**

*Ideas/projects include:* Successful funding of a PCIP proposal to expand learning communities program in collaboration with the University Learning Centre.

### **Aboriginal Engagement, Tom Allen & Charlotte Ross**

*Ideas/projects include:* facilitated the development of a partnership between the University of Saskatchewan (specifically the College of Ag and Bio) and One Earth Farms that resulted in a \$1 M gift to the university; meeting with many groups on and off campus with interest or who work with Aboriginal programs including several deans, Senate Round Table, Encana, FSIN, Sask Energy and others; collecting information about current aboriginal recruitment, education, programs and funding sources at the university; finding ways for the university to more quickly respond to external opportunities in Aboriginal area; and examining aboriginal culture and visual presence on campus. The group has developed a PCIP proposal for an Aboriginal Liaison position (currently under review).

### **Campus Environment for Students, Trever Crowe & Greg Fowler**

*Ideas/projects include:* developed a draft list of student “hot topic” concerns gathered from an email survey of front-line staff in SESD and USSU services; and meeting with the undergraduate student forum and colleges to expand and categorize the list. This document will be finalized and circulated to the campus community in the near future.

## **Research Success and Collaboration, Jim Thornhill**

*Ideas/projects include:* expanding the initial inventory of ideas/initiatives from the college and unit plans; identifying successful researchers at the University of Saskatchewan (e.g. Canada Research Chairs and highly successful researchers at U of S) to learn more about what contributes to success; and will consult with the research community and committees.

## **Areas of Pre-Eminence, Karen Chad**

*Ideas/projects include:* outlining the process of identifying, consulting and finalizing the areas of pre-eminence, expected sometime in fall 2009.

## **Interdisciplinary, Issues-based Scholarship, Lou Hammond Ketilson**

*Ideas/projects include:* defining what interdisciplinary means at the University of Saskatchewan; completing an internal review of current and proposed interdisciplinary initiatives including research centres and community-based research activities; and creating an inventory followed by identification of gaps and opportunities.

## **Innovation and Cultural Contributions, Peter Stoicheff & Glen Schuler**

*Ideas/projects include:* surveying colleges and departments about current or proposed innovative and cultural activities; examining ways these activities may have a cultural and/or economic impact on the University of Saskatchewan, the province, or Canada; forming a Cultural Facilities and Artifacts Subcommittee; and developing long-term strategy for museums and cultural facilities on campus and deepening the university's creative, cultural environment.

## **Collaboration between Academic and Non-Academic Units, Lyn Currie & Jacquie Thomarar**

*Ideas/projects include:* examination of collaborative models currently in place at the University of Saskatchewan; environmental scan of organizational structures for communication and financial services divisions at other universities; preparing a research paper/founding document on enhancing collaboration between academic and non-academic units, including a literature review, and collecting U of S case studies; and working with Facilities Management Division to explore ways to enhance inter-unit collaboration beginning with one unit as an example.

## **Leadership and Career Development, Bob Bayles & Keith Walker**

*Ideas/projects include:* No report was received.

## **Engagement in Governance and Decision-Making, John Rigby**

*Ideas/projects include:* drafting a Principles of Program Approval document, worked with the Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Research to streamline the approach for approval of new graduate programs.

## **Responsive and Flexible Policies and Procedures, Jim Germida**

*Ideas/projects include:* forming a working group and developing workplans; contributing to the Faculty Complement Foundational Document; it is expected that this commitment will be a four-year project.

## **Sustainability as a Shared Challenge, Alec Aitken & Julia Jones**

*Ideas/projects include:* developing a definition, mission and vision for sustainability at the University of Saskatchewan; conducted an online survey on current and possible sustainability activities on campus; and are now analyzing data and examining next steps. Take the survey here: <https://survey.usask.ca/survey.php?sid=14949>

## **Engagement with External Partners, Keith Carlson & Peggy Schmeiser**

*Ideas/projects include:* developing terms of reference; meeting with the Senate Round Table; defining scope of activity and definition of “external partner”; and examining what’s working, what’s not, and what’s needed for university engagement with external partners including campus-wide principles and standards.

## **Financial Resources, Laura Kennedy & Lou Qualtiere**

*Ideas/projects include:* literature review and questionnaire to universities across the country, terms of reference for a steering committee around improving the internal control environment, 250 people through “Introduction to Accounting” course, “Financial Fundamentals” to deans and senior administrators

## **Capital Resources, Colin Tennent & Chuck Rhodes**

*Ideas/projects include:* compiling a summary of capital and infrastructure projects, timeline, status of projects which includes those planned in other units including ICT, IPA, FMD, etc; and identifying which are progressing on schedule, and which may need support from the commitment.

## **People Resources, Grant Isaac & Barb Daigle**

*Ideas/projects include:* Martin Phillipson, College of Law, will be replacing Grant Isaac as co-commitment leader.

## **Quality and Accountability, Brett Fairbairn**

*Ideas/projects include:* drafting and consulting around an Achievement Record for the University of Saskatchewan; a finalized version is expected in the near future.

## **Next Steps**

Commitment leaders and working groups will be further developing and implementing their workplan and pursuing initiatives in the months to come. As projects and initiatives are further developed, there will be opportunities for discussion and input from the campus community on specific projects through various channels including: discussions at existing committees (e.g. council committees, dean’s council), workshops or special meetings on specific topics for targeted or campus-wide audiences, and other communication channels.

## **For more information**

Anyone with interest in any of the commitments or projects is encouraged to contact the commitment leaders directly or email [engaged\\_university@usask.ca](mailto:engaged_university@usask.ca). For a complete list of commitment leaders and contact information, please visit: [www.usask.ca/ip/inst\\_planning/second\\_intplan/commitments.php](http://www.usask.ca/ip/inst_planning/second_intplan/commitments.php)

## **Contact**

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