

*Attendance: See appendix B.*

1. Opening remarks

Dr. Card called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m., declaring that quorum had been obtained.

The chair invited Professor Emeritus Peter Flood, Veterinary Biomedical Sciences, to present a memorial tribute for his late colleague Professor Frantisek Hrudka, who joined the Department of Microscopic Anatomy at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in September 1969. Dr. Hrudka retired in June 1988 and passed away January 8, 2010.

Following a moment of silence, the business of Council resumed.

The chair remarked that Council continues to have difficulty in filling its vacancies and encouraged all Council members to invite their colleagues to consider running for a seat on Council. She stressed the importance of participation in governance by faculty members and invoked the example of the learning charter, which comes before Council today, as an important governing document that builds on the values and principles articulated in the teaching and learning foundational document. The chair encouraged council members to send their comments on the draft teaching and learning charter to Professor Long, chair of the teaching and learning committee.

2. Adoption of the agenda

PROCTOR/KALRA: That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2010

PARKINSON/KALRA: That the minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2010, be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

4. Business arising from the minutes

No business was identified as arising from the minutes.

5. Report of the president

The president commented on the presence of no fewer than five cranes on our campus and thanked Council members for their patience as the building plans of the university necessarily disrupt normal traffic patterns. He then provided a preliminary report on enrolment, noting that applications for admission appear to be strong for the 2010-11 year, though applications to the Edwards School of Business are down, a pattern reflected at other universities across the country.

He expressed thanks to Lisa Shepard and her admissions team for their excellent work in processing and tracking applications for admission.

The president concluded with some supplementary comments (appended to the minutes) on the situation that has developed at First Nations University of Canada.

In response to a question about whether it's possible to identify trends in applications from aboriginal students, the president offered to report back at the next council meeting.

There was a question about the institutional positioning project, and whether or not the larger faculty and staff that constitute the U of S have been sufficiently consulted, given the announced target date in April. The president invited Heather Magotiaux, the executive sponsor of the positioning initiative, to comment. Vice-president Magotiaux described the process of consultation that has taken place to date and invited any who have not taken the on-line survey to provide their comments to her office.

#### 6. Report of the provost

Dr. Fairbairn highlighted three matters included in his written report: searches and reviews in progress; the implementation of the second integrated plan and particularly the three imperatives articulated in the plan; and budgetary matters leading up to the release of the provincial budget in March.

There were some questions about the possible impact on students of a 4.5% tuition increase and on the extent to which colleges are privy to the tuition recommendations going to the board. There was also a question about the implications of the agreement with the University of Regina on operating principles in connection with the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, and the transferability of the model and the principles to other initiatives. The provost indicated that he sees this as a 'test' model which will need to prove its worth before being replicated for other programs.

#### 7. Aboriginal initiatives at the University of Saskatchewan

The provost reminded council members that he had been asked at the last Council meeting to make a presentation on initiatives, activities and priorities in the areas of aboriginal education, research and service. He invited Joan Greyeyes, Special Advisor to the president on aboriginal initiatives, to join him in presenting on this topic.

Dr. Fairbairn reviewed the intent and progress of the university's commitment to aboriginal engagement, and provided a recap of a presentation he made at the commitment leader workshop in January. He touched on topics of authenticity, of our presence on treaty land, and the re-engagement of indigenous peoples and interest in indigenous ways of knowing worldwide.

In the spirit that aboriginal engagement is everyone's business at the University of Saskatchewan, and something in which all members of the community have a stake, the provost posited and addressed four questions:

- What has been happening at our institution with aboriginal engagement?
- What are the paths we have followed to get to where we are today?
- How do we understand aboriginal engagement at the University of Saskatchewan?
- Where do we go next?

In discussing these questions, he referred to a working draft that was circulated at the door, entitled “Engaging with Aboriginal Peoples at the University of Saskatchewan.” He also referred to the *Conceptual Framework for Aboriginal Initiatives* and the university’s *Foundational Document on Aboriginal Initiatives*. He described the ways in which the university has built on its successes in this area and multiplied its initiatives to the point where we have the highest proportion of self-identified aboriginal people of any medical/doctoral university in Canada, and noted that these students are represented in all programs of study.

He then turned to why and how these initiatives happened, and the fact that they are not nearly sufficient, given the underrepresentation of aboriginal students in our student body and on our faculty and staff. Huge social and economic challenges remain in aboriginal communities, challenges which the expertise that resides in the university could help to address. He pointed out that there was remarkably little that happened with respect to aboriginal peoples for the first three decades of the university’s existence (with a few notable individual exceptions). In fact, during that time aboriginal people seem to have been regarded as of negligible significance, or as a remnant of history rather than part of the province’s future. The university in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was created to serve a colonial society and economy and reflected the values and assumptions of the founders.

Change, when it began, started outside the university rather than within it, and took place in small pockets of the institution. The demographics began to change, the American Indian movement and the civil rights movement began, and indigenous people began to focus on their cultural heritage.

Dr. Fairbairn posited that we are an institution that welcomes, serves, teaches and learns from aboriginal people, but that we are not exclusively an aboriginal institution. He invoked the metaphor of the chain of covenants to explain the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples. We are sitting on treaty land and would not exist if it were not for treaties, since the treaty signed at Fort Carleton marks the beginning of the history of our university. To the extent that treaties signify respectful sharing and arms linked in a common cause, perhaps the treaties are a Saskatchewan-based way of seeing the world and they can provide a useful model for going forward.

The provost went on to characterize our more recent history as a record of pathbreaking accomplishments and continuing momentum that has brought the University of Saskatchewan to its place as the leading medical/doctoral institution for aboriginal students. Our strengths are that we are especially well poised to feature aboriginal-focused scholarship; that as an institution we bring a broad range of perspectives; that we are the best place in Canada to do aboriginal scholarly and artistic work; and that we already have robust mechanisms for aboriginal recruitment and retention.

There are, however, some gaps. Recruitment and retention still lag, especially at the graduate level, and there is inadequate aboriginal visibility in faculty and staff. We also need to do better in intellectual engagement with indigenous knowledge and ideas.

Dr. Fairbairn then enumerated six possible strategies for conversation and action:

- identify symbols, designs and spaces that make the campus more inclusive—i.e. the aboriginal student centre;
- move more aboriginal students into graduate studies and recruit more graduate-trained aboriginal people as faculty and staff;
- investigate and focus on doing our part to influence high school completion rates and to engage with the K-12 system, especially grades 9 10 and 11;
- ensure more aboriginal people are candidates in our hiring pools;
- demonstrate our respect for indigenous knowledge and feature it in places it fits in our curriculum
- think systematically about the concept of engagement as we've envisioned it in our foundational document—that is, as a mutually beneficial partnership—and consider specific partnerships with specific aboriginal communities.

The provost then invited Joan Greyeyes, the special advisor to the president, to address her own role as special advisor and as executive sponsor for the commitment on aboriginal engagement. Ms. Greyeyes said a few words about her own personal and work history, which has been both with this institution and with first nations governance.

Ms. Greyeyes then spoke of her own priorities, which include ensuring better coordination and communication, attracting aboriginal students to graduate studies and to faculty positions, and finding out what is happening in aboriginal communities and reflecting how that influences what we do as a university for aboriginal people. She gave as an example of the kind of initiative that her office is working on the million-acre farm being established by One Earth Resources and the opportunity this provides for the university to establish an academic post-graduate diploma program in land management for aboriginal people and to provide scholarships. This project has now hired about 50 people, some of them our alumni. There will be another initiative involving potash, and there is some discussion about creating a school of agriculture with an aboriginal focus. The programs associated with these initiatives will come through Council.

Another area Ms. Greyeyes identified as a priority is the university's employment strategy. She reported that Candace Lafferty of the Human Resources Division is working with her office on a 75% basis to identify ways to increase the number of aboriginal people employed as faculty and staff. For example, FMD has recently committed to hiring more aboriginal people.

As executive sponsor for the commitment on aboriginal engagement, she has a committee of 10 people from across the institution who are looking at such things as the physical environment of the campus. Initiatives that have been discussed include the naming of roads and the provision of physical symbols and art work. In addition, she continues to meet with political organizations; the focus there has been on first nations because of current issues, especially First Nations University of Canada. She expressed the hope that our university will be responsive to any approaches FNUC may make for assistance and collaboration, but cautioned that the approach must come from them. Her office has also approached the federal government through

Western Economic Diversification and will be doing a workshop for various government departments to try and help them put together a strategy to hire aboriginal people. Finally, she indicated that the commitment group has identified a need to confine its work to three or four top priorities for the next four months in order to make its goals more achievable.

Dr. Fairbairn and Ms. Greyeyes then invited questions and comments from members of Council. In response to a question about plans or intentions to make aboriginal languages a part of campus, Ms. Greyeyes responded that a consultant in Alberta has been invited to identify what supports the university could provide to communities in the retention of their languages. She has met with the department of languages and linguistics and will meet with the new head of native studies. She also indicated that her office has been reviewing the university's web site to ensure that the things that are already in place for aboriginal peoples and programming are highlighted, and noted that the College of Education has a welcoming sign up in all first nations languages.

Another member commented on his observations of schools in Sandy Bay, The Pas, Little Pine, and Chief Poundmaker communities, noting that they have very poor facilities for teaching science and that efforts to 'jump start' science teaching with younger students in grades 7 and 8 have not been successful. The provost agreed that the university must think about education as a continuum and find creative ways to support the transition of students from elementary school through high school to eventual postsecondary education in a more creative way. There are several examples on this campus that provide models for transitioning students into university; we have an opportunity to think about these in a more systematic and sustained way, using the activities and contacts we already have. He cited the example of 'learning accounts' for young students as one example of the kind of investment the university could be making. Ms. Greyeyes added that another idea that came out of a recent tour in La Ronge was interest from NORTEP/NORPAC and Northlands College in working with the university to establish a math and science program at the Division 3 and 4 levels.

The chair thanked the presenters and expressed the hope that receiving updates on aboriginal initiatives would become a regular part of Council's business.

## 8. Report from the Student Associations

### 8.1 Report from the USSU

Warren Kirkland, USSU president, provided a verbal report and announced that 71 nominations have been received for the teaching excellence awards. He also announced that the USSU is launching a white ribbon campaign to end violence towards women and girls, and that Council members would see posters featuring our own faculty, staff and students across the campus in connection with this initiative. The USSU is also exploring the possibility of developing a microbrewery on campus, with a focus on the enhancement of academic programs. Mr. Kirkland invited expressions of support or interest in both of these initiatives. Finally, he noted that the call for nominations for the USSU Executive has gone out, and asked Council members to encourage their students to consider running.

## 8.2 Report from the GSA

Nicholas Fraser, GSA president, commended members of Council to his written report.

## 9. Academic programs committee

Professor Len Proctor presented this item as chair of the academic programs committee.

### 9.1 Request for approval: Arts and Science programs in Religion and Culture

PROCTOR/KALRA: That Council approve the proposal from the College of Arts and Science for the Bachelor of Arts three-year, four-year, honours, double honours and minor in the field of specialization of Religion and Culture.

CARRIED

### 9.2 Items for information

The following items were received for information:

- Approval by the academic programs committee of new minors in Arts and Science:
  - minor in Canadian Literature in English
  - minor in Jewish and Christian Origins
  - minor in Catholic Studies

There was no discussion of the minor in Canadian Literature in English. It was noted that the minor in Jewish and Christian Origins is overseen by the Department of Religion and Culture and not by STM.

On the minor in Catholic Studies, there was a question about the indication at the bottom of p. 54 of a need to clarify the governance model. Dean Still indicated that the academic governance has since been clarified. Professor Braj Sinha, head of the department of religion and culture, read a written statement on behalf of Peter Stoicheff, the vice dean of humanities, as follows: *Overall management of the Catholic Studies Minor will be the responsibility of the STM Dean's Office in consultation with the A&S and STM Coordination Committee and the STM Interdisciplinary Administrative Committee for Catholic Studies. Ultimate authority on all academic matters, including the class outlines, grades, standards, and student grievances etc. lies with the [College of] Arts and Science and will be exercised through the office of the Vice Dean Humanities, Head of Religion and Culture, and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Affairs.*

A member of Council suggested that the course descriptions for the Catholic Studies minor be rewritten to expunge the words "we" and "us", words which might suggest that the course is open only to Catholics. This was duly noted by Professor Sinha.

## 10. Policy oversight committee

The following items were presented by John Rigby, who as vice-chair is a member of the Policy Oversight Committee, and who presented the report in the place of the university secretary to

make it possible for her to continue to take minutes at the meeting. The following items were received for information:

10.1 Annual year-end report for 2008/2009

Dr. Rigby noted that the report reflects the tricameral governance structure of the University of Saskatchewan, and so policies may be approved by one or more of Council, the Board of Governors, or the Senate of the university. He noted that those policies that have been approved are available on the web site of the University Secretary, and that further information about those policies under consideration and/or development can be obtained from Amanda Storey in the Office of Corporate Administration or from the Office of the University Secretary.

10.2 Employment versus contracted services policy

Professor Rigby indicated that this policy was approved by the board at its December meeting, and is presented to Council for information. He recommended that academic administrators familiarize themselves with the procedures associated with this policy.

11. Other business

No other business was raised.

12. Question period

There were a number of comments from students regarding changes to library hours over the past year. It was observed that the cap this year on the 5% capital increase to acquisitions has led to the loss of between 5,500 and 6,000 monograph books this year, and the change to library hours has created a strain on students with family and employment commitments. The USSU has stepped in to provide study time. Students challenged the administration and Council to recall that the library is one “college” where changes to support affect all students.

The provost responded that he appreciates that the budget cuts to the library have affected students and knows that the library has been working to manage the impact. He clarified that the university has taken a one-year holiday from its usual (and rather extraordinary) practice of building into the budget a normal 5% increase. He acknowledged that the study hours issue is an interesting one, and relates to patterns of usage and service. He invited Dean Vicki Williamson to add some comments about the university’s planning in this regard. Dr. Williamson began by conceding that delivery of library resources in a digital age is very challenging, and that in the face of economic challenges, this becomes even more challenging. Last fall, the library introduced a new approach to hours of opening, and she assured Council that this is being very carefully monitored. Already some minor adjustments have been made in relation to the Veterinary Medicine, Law, and Medical libraries with the support of those colleges, but uptake by students during exam times was mixed. Dean Williamson acknowledged the support of the USSU, which has been in constant conversation with the library and has offered very strong support and input to the conversation. She reminded Council members that the library makes

95% of its holdings available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, by remote access, and that the collection includes over 400,000 electronic books.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. Next meeting is at 2:30 p.m., Thursday, March 18, 2010.

## Appendix A

### President's Report to Council Supplementary Comments February 25, 2010

Let me offer Council this comment on another subject of importance to post-secondary education in our province. I believe we all share concern about the situation that has developed at First Nations University of Canada and its federated partner, the University of Regina. I recognize that the primary initiative for resolving the governance and management difficulties that have developed there rests with those institutions.

But we at the University of Saskatchewan are not indifferent to them. On behalf of our university I have publicly stated on many occasions that the education of aboriginal students is one of the great social imperatives of the twenty-first century – in Saskatchewan and in Canada. And at last count the University of Saskatchewan has the highest percentage of aboriginal students of any medical-doctoral university in Canada. As a province and country, we need to do more in providing aboriginal students with opportunities for success in post-secondary education, and our progress will not depend on asserting models of control or exclusivity. There is plenty of work here for all of us, and the University of Saskatchewan will do its share through the aboriginal achievement model that we have developed. And we will continue to make 'aboriginal engagement' a central piece in our planning initiatives now, and in the future.