

Attendance: See appendix A.

1. Opening remarks

Dr. Card called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

The chair invited Professor Emeritus Kunio Komiyama, College of Dentistry, to present a memorial tribute for his late colleague Professor Richard Oles, who joined the College of Dentistry in 1979 as a full professor and taught periodontics and occlusion until 1999. Dr. Oles passed away October 4, 2009.

A tribute was also presented by Dean Brent Cotter, College of Law for Professor Marjorie Benson who passed away January 4, 2010. Professor Benson's career at the University of Saskatchewan began in 1982 as an assistant to the president of the university. She went on to receive a law degree from the U of S in 1988, and later a doctorate from Harvard Law School. She began teaching in the College of Law in 1992 and remained a member of the department until her death on January 4, 2010.

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

The chair commented on changes that are being implemented at the request of the coordinating committee to the distribution of the council agenda. Based on input from council members to the request for input circulated last September, the secretary has been asked to proceed with a pilot project and to post an electronic copy of the council agenda prior to each meeting. Council members will continue to receive a printed agenda, but it would be helpful if members would review the electronic version (at www.usask.ca/university_secretary/council/meeting/agenda.php) and provide feedback to the secretary. The hope is that ultimately council members will be able to opt out of receiving the paper copy.

2. Adoption of the agenda

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

CARRIED

3. Minutes of the meeting of December 17, 2009

PARKINSON/SURTEES: That the minutes of the meeting of December 17, 2009, 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 provost conveyed the president's regret at not being able to attend the meeting. Dr. Fairbairn called attention to comments in President MacKinnon's report on the possible third wave of H1N1, and on the College Quarter Master Plan. He also reported on a recent interview granted to the University of Saskatchewan in Montreal by an international panel of experts in connection with the university's application for a Canada Excellence Research Chair, noting that the impression given by the reviewers was that the University of Saskatchewan's application, led by Dr. Karen Chad, was an excellent one. In response to a question from a Council member, he and Dr. Chad indicated that there were no other applications for CERC chairs from Saskatchewan besides the one submitted by the U of S.

There was a question about the university's collection of data for absences related to H1N1 during the first term. Associate Vice President Student and Enrolment Services David Hannah reported that while absenteeism was reported to have been higher than usual in first-term classes, there is no evidence that students were prevented from completing their first-term work because of the illness.

6. Report of the provost

Dr. Fairbairn then invited members to review his own report. In connection with Council's pilot electronic agenda, he noted that PCIP meetings went paperless last fall; his office recently did a survey to test the reaction of members, which has been overwhelmingly positive. Eliminating paper copies of agendas and supporting materials has also eliminated a considerable amount of paper, filing and administrative work for the staff who support the committee.

Dr. Fairbairn drew members' attention to the new teaching awards arising out of the commitment area on teaching and learning. He also encouraged members to take note of the announcement of the Whelen lecture on February 23; the lecture will be given by anthropologist Margaret Visser.

The provost then took an opportunity to talk about the two-year budget adjustment process that the university is currently undertaking. He reported that he has worked closely with colleges and units through the first round and is now beginning to look at the second year of the process. So far the institution appears to be on track to achieve more than \$5M of the approximately \$10M target. He noted that a significant proportion of these savings has come from central university funds of various kinds, including utilities. He also observed that there has been keen interest expressed by the community about the impact of the budget measures on staff positions, and reported that aside from sessional lecturer positions, approximately 60 positions will be lost. These losses have resulted so far in 21 layoffs (14 in academic units, 7 in non-academic units), and the elimination of 15 vacant positions. In terms of the impact on sessional positions, three colleges have chosen to implement reductions in their sessional stipend pools. In many cases the affected course offerings have been reassigned to existing faculty or graduate students. Many of these changes involve creating costs in the short term in order to achieve a long-term reduction in costs; recognizing this, the Board of Governors has provided funding from reserves for one-time costs associated with these budget reductions. He is currently consulting with colleges about tuition fee rates for 2010-11 and reviewing college plans for student enrolment in academic programs.

Speaking more generally about the university's financial situation, Dr. Fairbairn reported no significant new developments. The improvements in investment performance and the level of endowments and a number of procedural and other improvements around pensions have been offset by increasing uncertainty in the provincial operating grant as it will affect the multi-year budgeting framework. The situation remains uncertain, with some factors alleviating concerns and some exacerbating them. He closed by observing that the university's diversified sources of revenue (such as investments) stand the university in good stead and suggest the importance of pursuing such sources.

Responding to a question about the probable size of the provincial grant to the university, the provost reported that the administration has no further information than what has been widely reported in the media—that the government is dealing with some complex financial issues and is sending broad signals that the budget will reflect losses in provincial revenues and investments.

7. Report from the Student Associations

7.1 University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

USSU president Warren Kirkland reported that the boardings have come off the Lower Place Riel construction site, and invited Council members to see the site of the soon-to-be-reopened Campus Computer Store.

7.2 Graduate Student's Association

GSA president Nick Fraser reported on behalf of the GSA. He invited Council members to drop by the former chapel of Emmanuel and St. Chad to see the newly opened Graduate Commons, and to participate in a multi-faith ceremony and smudge on Tuesday at noon.

He also reported that the GSA is currently heavily involved in student advocacy, and that the number of students requesting advocacy seems to be growing. This work is made easier by the strong working relationship the association has with various administrative and academic departments within the university, and their goal is to effectively represent their members while preserving that relationship.

Mr. Fraser called members' attention to a conference on intellectual property rights taking place in mid-May; a call for papers will go out at the end of January and he encouraged members to inform their graduate students about this opportunity. The conference will be interdisciplinary in nature and will draw participation from graduate students across western Canada. In addition, the first annual western Canadian graduate students' association meeting will be held in March in Regina.

Finally, Council members were encouraged to add the GSA channel to their PAWS layout.

8. Planning and priorities committee mid-year report

Committee chair Dr. Jay Kalra presented his committee's report for information, and provided a brief overview of the work of the planning and priorities committee over the past 6 months. He

recognized the continuing work of all members of the committee and thanked them and committee secretary Sandra Calver for their contributions.

9. Bylaws committee request for input: aboriginal representation on council committees

Bylaws committee chair Linda Ferguson invited input from council members on the best way for Council to engage more fully with aboriginal communities and on issues of importance to aboriginal people, including faculty and staff. She reported that she has so far received 6 responses from individual faculty members as well as responses from the various committees of Council.

Lois Jaeck, chair of the academic support committee, reported that she had raised this issue with her committee and had a lively discussion about the issue. One question the committee had was whether the aboriginal community on campus sees a need for such a committee. In general, the majority of the committee felt that creating a separate aboriginal affairs committee would lead to a kind of ghettoization, and might tend to take responsibility away from the university community as a whole.

Another member applauded the initiative and acknowledged the legitimate concerns about ghettoization and potential overloading of aboriginal faculty, but noted that the committee would not need to comprise solely aboriginal members and would not need to be large to be effective. Since the needs of aboriginal people are specifically referenced in our institutional plans, he felt there ought to be a body that pays attention to these issues, and that having such a committee would not absolve other committees of their responsibility to pay attention to aboriginal matters. He noted that many years ago Council had agreed to form an education equity committee, but that this had never materialized.

The coordinator of the university's SUNTEP programs urged Council to gather more information before moving forward with this initiative. He suggested a revisiting of the foundational document on aboriginal issues to determine which objectives articulated in that document are being met, and to find ways to measure the success of initiatives which have been undertaken to date as a result of this document. He suggested that senior management be asked to report to Council on progress, including a report from the special advisor to the president on aboriginal initiatives.

The provost responded that the foundational document on responding to the needs of aboriginal peoples, which was approved by Council in 2003, was the basis of the aboriginal achievement model and the creation of the position of special advisor. He noted that there is a commitment to these activities within the integrated plan, and a commitment working group has been formed. He takes from the comments that have been made a need to communicate better about what has been happening, and expressed his willingness to provide a report to Council at the discretion of the chair.

A member of Council added that if Council invites a presentation from the administration, it should also invite input from the aboriginal community the university serves, and from aboriginal students and faculty, about their needs and what the mandate of an aboriginal committee should be.

Professor Ferguson invited further comments from council members, noting that the responses will be considered at next bylaws committee meeting.

10. Academic programs committee re: revised academic schedule for 2010/11

Professor Len Proctor, chair of the committee, presented the revised academic schedule for information.

11. Research, scholarly and artistic work committee mid-year report

Dr. Carol Rodgers presented the report as chair of the committee, speaking first on the activities of the committee, and then inviting Dr. Karen Chad to present a brief report on the activities of her own office as reflected in the appendix to the committee's report. Dr. Rodgers also extended appreciation to Dr. David Janz for his 6 months of service as chair and to Dr. Karen Chad on her new appointment as vice-president research.

Dr. Chad noted the report to the research, scholarly and artistic work committee gives Council a chance to see the breadth and depth of the work undertaken by the Office of the Vice-President Research. This work is made possible by a number of advisory committees and working groups that provide advice, counsel and guidance to her office. She alluded to the seven broad themes of the document, which reflect the areas of focus of her office. She told Council that she looks forward to working with colleges, departments, centres and units in her upcoming work under the broad theme of "Discovery with Impact."

A member of Council asked about the recent external review of research services, and what changes in structure and function have come about as a result of the review. Dr. Chad provided some background, noting that when Susan Blum assumed leadership of the research services unit, she embraced the opportunity for such a review. The report of the review team was submitted in August and Dr. Chad has been working with the RSAW committee and the associate deans research group on implementing the recommendations. She expects that over the next 4-6 weeks a communiqué will go out to the campus community to outline the changes that will take place. These changes will provide more role clarity with respect to specific positions and will represent a more blended approach, with some of the central resources moved out to the colleges and administrative units that have collaborative responsibility for research outcomes.

12. Other business

No other business was identified.

13. Question period

There were no questions.

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m. Next meeting is at 2:30 p.m., Thursday, February 25, 2010.