

# University of Regina Strategic Planning Project Charter

## Project Principles & Objectives

The University's 2009-2014 Strategic Plan *māmawohkamâtowin, Our Work, Our People, Our Communities* has served us well, but is coming to the end of its intended horizon. Moreover, important changes have occurred in the university and its environment since that plan was initially created, such as<sup>1</sup>:

- Funding scenario uncertainty;
- Faculty concerns raised regarding the direction in our academic mission;
- The state of the physical infrastructure;
- Increasing demands for career-directed and professional education;
- Provincial Aboriginal population growth in terms of numbers and expectations;
- Technology advancement and adaptation challenges; and
- A new generation of students with different interests and characteristics.

These internal and external trends, combined with other development potentially affecting the University, provide motivation and a sense of necessity for renewing the University's Plan.

A strategic planning process can serve to unite the university community including our students, faculty and staff, build campus spirit and collegiality, and foster a renewed sense of commitment to institutional goals. The right type of inclusive process can also produce a clearer sense of identity and university direction internally and with our external partners. It can leverage our strengths and mitigate enterprise risk. It can bring forward fresh ideas from various quarters and provide a reality check from external perceptions. As one member of the university leadership team has put it, planning provides the opportunity for "*transforming creativity into community wisdom*".

The timing couldn't be more needed and optimal for a new planning cycle. The strengths of the current plan can be retained and built upon while the experience and knowledge gained over the previous five years proposes new approaches and content. This will allow us to better meet the changing needs of our students, faculty and staff, and adapt with the important changes that have, and will continue to, occur within the University's environment.

## Objectives of the Strategic Planning Process

Planning theory and past experiences at the University of Regina suggest that the next university planning process should aim to have the following characteristics:

- **Planned:** If planning has merit, then clearly the planning process itself should be well organized. As well, an initial "planning to plan" exercise will ensure that all members of the strategic planning Facilitation Team are familiar with the key elements of a planning process.
- **Value Based:** Successful university planning depends on transparency, inclusiveness, honesty, openness, trust, active listening, critical examination of ideas and evidence, and constant communication.

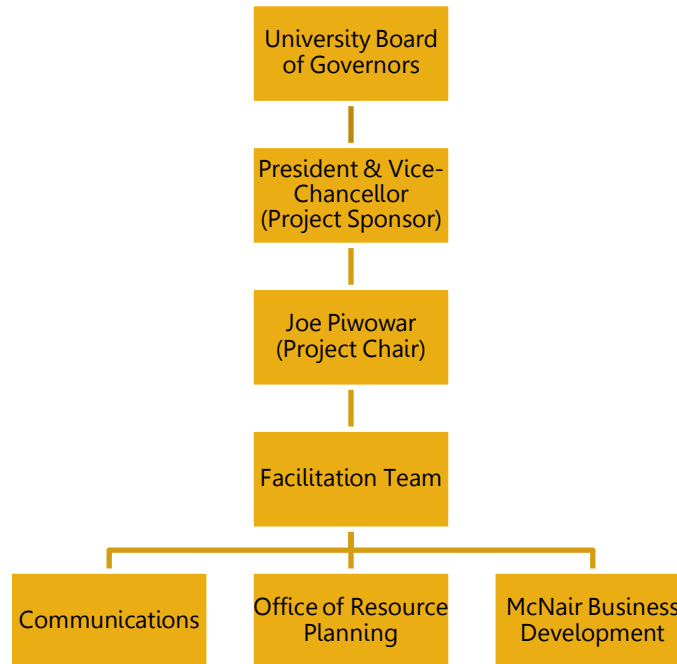
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<sup>1</sup> Content pulled from *Planning for the Next Strategic Plan*, approved by the Board of Governors, February 14, 2014.

- **Participatory:** A process that engages the campus community including its students, faculty and staff will draw upon a richer array of information and be a better plan. Wide participation will lead to greater understanding by, and support from, the campus community for the plan and its implementation. The process promises to create “buy-in”. And as members of the community are included and engaged they become aware and supportive of the need for change as expressed in the plan. Tools and techniques such as online surveys, idea competitions, blogs, an active website, public forums and other events all serve to generate excitement and engagement.
- **Strategic:** A common failure of university planning processes is that they are largely inward-looking and backward-looking, ignoring current and potential external conditions. One way to address this issue is to engage leaders from external partners, stakeholder organizations and community groups in the development of the plan.
- **Rapid:** The University has some major strategic challenges on its plate that require prompt addressing. Moreover, any strategic planning endeavour demands fortitude from its key participants. However, this determination need not be tested by a prolonged process. Timelines will be pre-determined and adhered to.
- **Focused:** One of the purposes of a strategic plan is to identify critical issues and the means of dealing with them. A plan that attempts to address all concerns and to benefit all elements of a university will fail either by burying critical content in extensive coverage or by being too general and not making choices. The identification of priorities provides direction for decisions throughout the university.
- **Produces a clear, concise, communicable plan:** The main purpose of planning is to generate a plan that will guide decision-making. To be effective, the plan must be accessible to all members of the university community – not just its authors.
- **Built on past successes and current initiatives:** The University has achieved much during the past planning cycle. Those successes can be the foundation for further achievement. A plan that is evolutionary and celebratory is more likely to obtain support than one that advocates radical changes in direction (unless clearly necessary).
- **Ready for implementation:** An effective planning process will lay the groundwork for prompt action on its first implementation steps. It will build on the energy and commitment generated by the planning activity and will capture opportunities and deal with “quick wins” while they are fresh.
- **Includes measurable anticipated outcomes:** An important tool for ensuring that progress is occurring with respect to plan implementation is the identification of measurable expected outcomes. Moreover, provincial government reporting requirements include an annual report on progress in some measurable form, whether quantitative results, milestones achieved, survey data indicators or specific new outcomes.

## Project Structure

For the 2015-2020 University of Regina strategic planning process, the following project structure will be in place:



### Roles & Responsibilities

**Board of Governors:** Following consultations with the senior leadership team, the planning process formally begins with approval by the Board for the initiation of the project as described in this document. Board members will have opportunities throughout the planning process to provide information and ideas.

**President & Vice-Chancellor:** Once initiation of the project is approved, it is the responsibility of the President & Vice-Chancellor, as Project Sponsor, to commit a Project Chair to lead and guide the strategic planning process.

**Joe Piwowar:** The strategic planning process will be overseen by a facilitation team chaired by Dr. Joe Piwowar, Canada Research Chair in Geomatics and Sustainability.

**Facilitation Team:** Following an open and transparent call for participation, Dr. Piwowar has assembled a strong facilitation team that has broad representation from across Campus:

- Joe Piwowar (chair)
- Michelle Beitel, Contracts & Research Officer (Office for Research, Innovation and Partnership)
- Cory Butz, Associate Dean Research and Graduate Studies (Faculty of Science)
- Kate Cushon, Communications and Programming Developer (Centre for Teaching and Learning)
- Bonnie Dobson, Faculty Administrator (Faculty of Nursing)
- Gina Grandy, Associate Professor (Faculty of Business Administration)
- Larena Hoeber, Associate Professor (Faculty of Kinesiology & Health Studies)
- Gwen Keith, Past President (UofR Alumni Association)

- Kelly Kummerfield, Associate Vice-President (Human Resources)
- Chris Oriet, Associate Professor (Department of Psychology)
- Wes Pearce, Associate Dean (Faculty of Fine Arts, Elected by Council)
- Shauneen Pete, Associate Professor (Faculty of Education) & Executive Lead: Indigenization
- Lisa Watson, Associate Professor (Paul. J. Hill School of Business & Kenneth Levene Graduate School of Business)
- Dipo Ziwa, Undergraduate Student (URSU Board of Directors)

**Communications:** Open, thorough and regularly updated communications will be driven by a communications plan approved by the facilitation team. As well, regular discussions will be held with leadership groups within the university whose members will have responsibility to encourage participation and act as ambassadors for the process. The Project Chair will be responsible for communications with support from the facilitation team, UofR Communications team, and McNair.

**Resource Planning Office:** An additional level of support for the process will be provided by the Office of Resource Planning. This Office is responsible for planning activities within the University and has many years of experience to draw upon. The ORP has a substantial library of research and data applicable for the environmental scan.

**McNair Business Development Inc.:** Work support and required capacity for the planning process will be provided by McNair Business Development (McNair). The McNair team will gather data, record and consolidate input from planning discussions, prepare draft documents, and otherwise assist the planning process as assigned by the Project Chair.

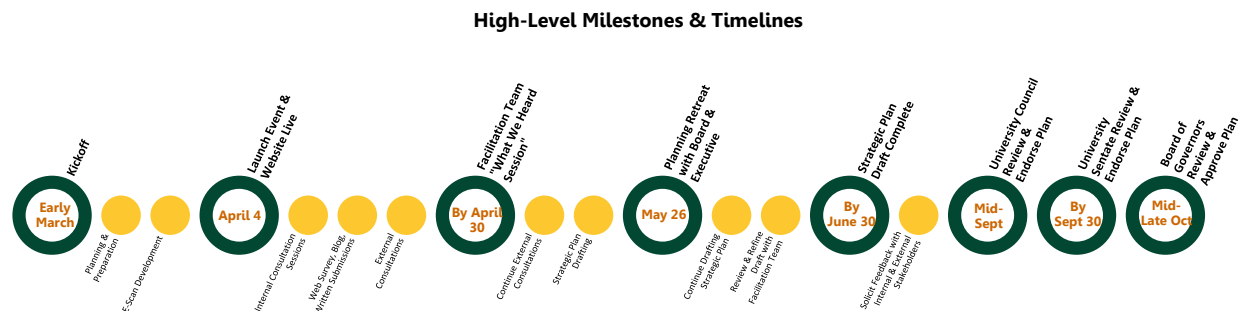
## Code of Conduct

To integrate ethics into the work of the team, we must decide what we stand for and what we value. Therefore, the Project Chair, Facilitation Team and McNair agree to the following Code of Conduct:

- **Encourage Participation** – This project is an opportunity to shape the future state and direction of the University of Regina, and all internal (students, faculty and staff) and external stakeholders have a right contribute.
- **Open Discussion** – We believe in the inherent value of the individual and the collective wisdom of the University. We strive to help the University make the best use of the contributions of each of its students, faculty and staff. We believe that collaborative and cooperative interaction builds consensus and produces meaningful outcomes.
- **Mutual Respect** – We seek to have all relevant stakeholders represented and involved. We promote equitable relationships among the participants and facilitators and ensure that everyone has an opportunity to examine and share their thoughts and feelings within a mutually respectful and collegial environment which is free of harassment and discrimination. It is expected that all participants use respectful behaviour and appreciate the diversity represented. This aligns with the Respectful University policy.
- **Time Management** – The Project Chair, Facilitation Team and McNair agree to adhere to the project timelines and conduct assignments accordingly.
- **Integrity** – We agree to act with integrity and honesty in all relationships and in all workplaces, avoiding all conflicts of interest between our work and personal interests.

# Project Deliverables

## Project Plan and Milestones



- March: Planning, Preparation & E-Scan Development
- April 4: Launch Event & Website Live
- April: Internal Consultation Sessions (i.e. Open Sessions, Survey, Blog, etc.)
- April/May: External Consultations
- By April 30: Facilitation Team “What We Heard” Session
- May/June: Strategic Plan Drafting
- May 26: Planning Retreat with Board & Executive
- End of June: Facilitation Team “Review Draft” Session
- July/August: Solicit Feedback for Strategic Plan Draft
- Mid-September: University Council to Review and Endorse Strategic Plan
- By September 30: University Senate to Review and Endorse Strategic Plan
- October: Board of Governors to Review and Approve Strategic Plan

## Project Plan

### Step 1: Environmental Scan

An environmental scan is an important tool in the strategic planning process for assessing the social and economic trends/drivers that will impact the future of the University. Moreover, the University cannot be shielded from local and provincially conditions impacted by changing national and international forces.

Requirements for the environmental scan will be completed prior to the consultations and it will consider among other things:

- Literature review on the future of post-secondary education provincially and nationally
- University financial and registration trends
- Saskatchewan’s 10-year economic growth profile
- Criticism of the University’s value proposition with students and other stakeholders

### Step 2: Facilitation Plan & Delivery

The design, development, and execution of the Facilitation Plan will be guided by the principles and values of the strategic planning process as outlined earlier. More specifically, the Plan will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide ample opportunity for all internal (students, faculty and staff) and external stakeholders to be heard and provide their voice;
- Ensure that opportunity for input is structured during formal facilitation sessions;

- Allow for flexibility in the scheduling of days and times for input sessions;
- Create multiple forums that allow for structured feedback and engagement;
- Deploy a number of tools and techniques for input, such as an online survey or web form submission, blog discussions, hand out surveys, and publicly accessible forums.

The Facilitation Team, with support from McNair, will lead and manage the consultation design, deployment, and process. To achieve these ends, the following general approach will be taken:

**Public Forum Consultation Sessions:** The Facilitation Team will host a Public Announcement Media Launch Event signalling to the University students, faculty, staff and public the official start of the strategic planning process. As well, once all consultations are complete (targeted for the end of April), a larger Community Engagement session will be organized and hosted by the Team to indicate the end of the formal consultation phase of the project.

**University Internal Stakeholder Group Sessions:** Throughout the month of April, the Facilitation Team will be hosting a number of internal University consultation sessions (for faculty, staff, and students). This approach will allow for ample opportunity and flexibility in terms of people's availability and time constraints. Individuals will be invited to sign-up and confirm a day and time that meets their personal schedule. The format will allow for a healthy cross-section of feedback and input from all corners of the University.

**External Stakeholder Group Meetings:** The Team will also be engaging many of the key external stakeholders (i.e. City of Regina, Wascana Centre Authority, and the Government of Saskatchewan officials). The list of external consultations will be finalized with the Facilitation Team.

**Additional Engagement Tools & Techniques:** As noted earlier, the Facilitation Team will also ensure that multiple avenues of input are offered. This adaptive approach will likely include an online survey/web form submission, website presence, handout surveys, and weekly Blog discussion activity.

## *Step 3: Strategic Plan Development*

Based on all of the input, research and feedback from the previous stages, this step will involve the review, adaptation, revision and affirmation around the organization's new goals, objectives and key priorities over the next five years.

This plan will be developed by the Facilitation Team with support from McNair. Once approved by the Facilitation Team, it will be presented to the Board of Governors and the University Executive for final approval.

## *Step 4: Validation & Approval*

This step involves gathering feedback from internal and external stakeholders as appropriate regarding the draft strategic plan. The plan will then be reviewed and endorsed by the University Council, then the University Senate, and then final review and approval by the University Board of Governors. At this point, the University will be ready to execute public communication and sharing of the new strategic plan with the community and its partners.