Fall 2020 Hybrid Scenario Implementation Plan

“Courageous Curiosity, Boundless Collaboration, Inspired Communities ... Safely”

June 4, 2020
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The University the World Needs

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) is home to 25,700 students from 130 countries and over 6000 faculty and staff who contribute to one of the top research-intensive, medical-doctoral universities in Canada. Guided by our University Plan: The University the World Needs, together we work across disciplines and with our communities to find creative solutions to the most pressing global challenges. USask enables world-leading research, with impact, in areas of global importance such as water and food security, and infectious diseases. Study and discovery are enhanced by our outstanding resources, including the Canadian Light Source synchrotron, VIDO-InterVac, the Global Institute for Food Security, the Global Institute for Water Security and the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation. USask is proud to have also supported 72 Rhodes Scholars, 296 Order of Canada recipients, two Nobel Prizes in Chemistry, 44 Olympians, and one Prime Minister. Our more than 163,000 alumni, recognized for their strong prairie work ethic, resourceful nature and determination, are leading change here at home in Saskatchewan and Canada, as well as around the world.
Planning Foundations

Introduction

Following the University’s Phase I CoVID-19 crisis response (rapid move to remote operations in March 2020), a Phase II Task Force (CP2TF) was struck by the President’s Executive Committee (PEC) April 8, 2020, tasked with: (1) developing appropriate scenarios, assumptions, and analyses; and from this, (2) developing a strategy document that provides a recommendation regarding the fall term (i.e. September – December, 2020). The Task Force concluded the process May 4, 2020 with submission of a final report and the Task Force’s recommendation for “approval, preparation, and implementation of the Hybrid Fall Term Scenario” [remote delivery with some on-campus presence where people and activities on campus would need to be prioritized - see page 7 below, Fall Hybrid Scenario Description].

The next—necessary and critically important—part of the university’s Phase II CoVID-19 response is to further the recommendation of the CP2TF to develop a Phase II Hybrid Fall Term implementation plan for PEC consideration. The CP2TF also recommended that transparent principles be adopted to guide decision making and implementation, and further, that a newly formed Pandemic Recovery and Response Team (PRT) be constructed to coordinate transition from the current state to the hybrid scenario and construct a Phase II Hybrid Strategy Implementation Plan (at the direction of PEC, the PRT was constituted May 5, 2020). It was proposed the implementation plan include a mechanism to monitor the status of CoVID-19, and a process to coordinate the transition from the current state to the hybrid scenario. In consultation with an Advisory Hub and after engaging internal and external stakeholders, the following was developed to meet those stated expectations.

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<tr>
<th>Pandemic Response &amp; Recovery Team (PRT)</th>
<th>Research; Chair of PRT</th>
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<th>Advisory Hub</th>
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<td>Vice-Provost, Faculty Relations</td>
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Mandate

To deliver a cross-institutional plan for implementing a hybrid fall term beginning September 1, 2020 and extending to December 20, 2020.

Guiding Principles

**Value, protect and support our people.** We will seek and implement the best guidance possible for the health and safety of our students and employees, and to ensure the return of people to campus will be done in a conscious, careful, and methodical way. We will strive to minimize financial hardship to employees when contemplating reward and employment strategies, and ensure that all legal and regulatory obligations are fully considered.

**Deliver the academic and research mission of the University of Saskatchewan.** We continue our important academic, research, and community engagement work as the University the World Needs. Continually strive to allow as much core mission activity as possible to proceed without disruption, while respecting the necessary limits required by the evolving situation, and understanding the potential to return to stricter limits should the situation require.

**Support Student Success.** We prioritize students’ academic progress, provide them with the supports they need, and strive to minimize adverse impacts to their academic progress.

**Ensure the University of Saskatchewan’s long-term excellence and financial sustainability.** We are responsible not just for the university’s success today, but for its long-term sustainable future, and we will actively seek opportunities to improve the way we deliver on our mission. CoVID-19 will have a significant negative impact on the university’s financial situation on both a one-time basis and ongoing. Significant and immediate actions are required that support long-term cost reductions and revenue enhancements to protect the university’s longer-term financial sustainability and reputation.

**Engage and Contribute.** We will effectively contribute to the province’s efforts to respond to the rapidly shifting public health situation and the province’s recovery, while also contributing to global efforts to address the coronavirus pandemic.

**Acknowledge Impact.** We recognize and appreciate that decisions the university makes, and the actions taken may have an impact on our external communities. We are committed to factoring that impact into the ongoing decision-making on our staged approach to increasing activity.

**Communicate with our community.** We will share our CoVID-19 status, plans, and actions around increased activity with internal and external stakeholders to ensure transparency and timeliness.
Criteria

The following criteria are intended to inform and guide decision-making, such that any intended action or decision:

- Is fully aligned with the principles listed above.
- Evaluates the potential for public (or potentially public) communication that may be necessary and ensures that any such action/decision is discussed with PEC and Communications.
- Empowers colleges and units to function effectively, but within defined parameters that provide sufficient guidance, mitigate risk, and ensure alignment.
- Ensures sound financial management practices are maintained throughout the recovery period.
- Adheres to all public health directives and the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan regarding allowable timelines for lifted restriction for specific services
  - Directives became more restrictive over time when they were implemented, and we can expect the loosening will look similar in reverse.
- Allows adjustment of activity, while respecting the limits required by the evolving situation and the potential to return to stricter limits should the situation require. Work that can be done from a distance should be, to protect the health and safety of those required to come onto campus.
- Protects the physical, mental, and emotional health and safety of our workforce by minimizing risk and potential exposure for all workers on site. Toward that end:
  - The PRT and Crisis Operations Team (COT) must be made aware of all activities within on-site university spaces.
  - Safety must be rigorously maintained, with adequate access and training for use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other safety-related supplies.
  - People Leaders must identify whom amongst their workforce are considered essential personnel and must take the necessary measures to protect the health and ensure the safety and well-being of the workforce.
  - Faculty and staff who feel uncomfortable about their work situation, for whatever reasons, need to know that they can report their concerns to Safety Resources (safetyresources@usask.ca or 306-966-4675) or call our confidential safe disclosure line.
    - Contractors and other external workers on site should be coordinated through the EPMO and Safety Resources. All contractors must complete the Contractor Safety Orientation prior to beginning any work, registration available at safetyresources.usask.ca
- Maintains a priority focus on students, both graduate and undergraduate.
- Factors the impact on our external communities of decisions the university makes.
- Ensures the process for approving increased activity is informed, fair and transparent (Appendix E: Framework for a Staged Approach to Increasing Activity in University Spaces).
Fall Hybrid Scenario Description

The fall hybrid scenario recognizes that:

- Academic course delivery will be complex and multi-layered, focusing on three academic program areas: (1) Direct entry; (2) Health sciences; (3) Law; and (4) Graduate programs. Classes will be “binned” into one of three categories:
  - Offered in fully remote mode for fall 2020
  - Delivered (at least partly) using a face-to-face mode
  - Delayed/not offered – in cases where a course could not be mobilized for the fall of 2020 it would not be offered for a term

- Specific courses are identified for in-person delivery having met the threshold that it is not possible to achieve the required learning outcomes in a remote environment (e.g., clinical skill development). A logistics plan will be developed to ensure safety and adherence to all necessary public health guidelines.

- Research will occur with defined criteria and approval processes, and a staged approach with stringent mitigation measures will allow for onsite research activities to increase. Further increases in research activity, both onsite and off-site, will depend on public health directives, COVID-19 cases remaining low, sufficient resources and other factors.

- Necessary staff will be onsite to support the delivery of critical teaching and learning and research work, as well as to support the remaining student body. Non-essential staff will continue to work remotely.

- Administrative units will be required to support remote delivery and the learning management system (LMS) system implementation will be fast-tracked.
• Comprehensive analysis of overall budget projections, based on student enrolments and changes to
  revenue streams, as well as additional one-time costs and longer-term impacts, will continue.

• Approvals of all related expenditures to support the hybrid implementation will follow established
  approval processes.

• Safety resources staff will be on-site and engaged in all aspects of preparedness to support the
  hybrid scenario.

• Safety and wellbeing of faculty, staff and students will be embedded within all aspects of the plan.

• Operations will strategically open buildings, but not full access; and provide space configuration to
  ensure appropriate physical distancing and ability to clean.

• Continued robust government relations and communications plan that will support fluid channels of
  information to students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders.

• Governance bodies will continue to meet through online, remote channels and decision-making
  responsibilities will be carried out remotely.

• We will encourage enrolment; however, we will not expect the typical number of international
  students.

• The size of gatherings and number of people occupying a public space will adhere to provincial
  public health directives.

Planning Assumptions

• Any increase or return of activities will be done in a conscious, careful, and methodical way based on
  the Implementation Plan approved by PEC and supported by colleges and units, and in alignment
  with provincial public health directives and the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan.

• Efforts to construct an Implementation Plan will be purposely complimented and further refined by
  internal and external consultation. The accelerated development of the initial draft Implementation
  Plan by the PRT/Advisory Hub is intended to kick-start the process and enable consultation which,
  albeit hastened because of the pandemic, is both genuine and fully informed.

• While it is understood that consideration and approval for activities will be undertaken individually,
  there will be a need for effective and over-riding institutional coordination, and practical
  consideration of capabilities, resources, and priorities.

• We need to be prepared for a lengthy and difficult pandemic. Multiple waves and variable risks of
  transmission are possible, if not likely, and the fall could be worse than the current risk,
  necessitating a re-tightening of restrictions.

• Despite the many uncertainties, USask remains determined to achieve its strategic plan and realize
  its goals, and even use this experience as an opportunity to drive positive, long-term change. In
  doing so, we will need to facilitate and encourage research activity and impact, excellence in
  teaching and learning, student enrolment and engagement, and community engagement.
• As the pandemic evolves, it seems unlikely there will be a sudden ‘all-clear’ signal, and it is more apt that a phased lessening of restrictions will occur. We will need to anticipate and address both the impatience and/or anxiety that our community will reasonably experience.

• It must be appreciated there will be varied and differing responses and reactions to the pandemic amongst students (undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral fellows), staff and faculty. A menu of meaningful supports, practices and programs will be required to assist our community during difficult and uncertain times.

• Cultural, athletic, recreational, artistic and other facets of an all-encompassing university community have also been significantly impacted. Efforts to enable members of our university, as well as the broader local, Indigenous, and provincial community, to continue to benefit from these endeavors will need to be employed.

• The impact of the pandemic will disproportionately affect international student enrolment, student and faculty exchange, and international research and partnership activities.

• Staff absences are possible due to illness, for themselves or their families. We must anticipate appropriate backups, as well as maximum flexibility and potential support.

• There may be government support programs, some directed to specific initiatives or with directed restrictions, that may become accessible to support the university in response to the pandemic. We will need to be aware and responsive to benefit from these programs.

• It is unlikely all institutional areas will move forward with the Implementation Plan at the same rate, along the same path and in the same stage. This realistic flexibility must be acknowledged, and permitted, as external influences and necessary conditions to allow progression may differ between areas.

• It may be expected (most likely within the provincial context), and beneficial that USask announces and implements decisions in a unified fashion across the sector.
Key Area Fall Implementation Plans

The following section features five key areas for fall implementation planning. These areas include Academic (Teaching & Learning), Research, Operations and Facilities, Technology, and People and Resources.

Academic (Teaching & Learning)

Introduction

There has been much complexity in working through the best course of action for academic programming in the fall of 2020 (and into the winter) and yet notably, there has been much hard work and dedication on the part of all of those involved. An Academic Planning Task Force led to the development of four sub-group clusters of planning activity: (1) Health Sciences, (2) Direct Entry, (3) Graduate programming, and (4) Law. Each of these sub-groups is chaired by Vice-Provost Patti McDougall, with the graduate programming group co-chaired by CGPS Dean Trever Crowe. Membership on subgroups 1, 2, and 4 has included associate deans academic/students with resource personnel. Subgroup 3 includes associate deans research/graduate studies plus a collection of graduate chairs.

A key activity of the planning process has been to identify what program aspects can be delivered remotely and what programming elements require consideration and necessary logistical planning for delivery in-person. Decision-making in this regard follows the Framework for a Staged Approach to Increasing Activity in University Spaces (Appendix E). The fundamental principle has been that if a class or program element can be delivered remotely, it should be delivered remotely. Any recommendations for face-to-face delivery were questioned and tested to establish the exceptional nature of recommendation (Appendix A). The bar for face-to-face delivery was deliberately set very high to remain aligned with relevant public health directives and to acknowledge that in-person delivery will necessitate extensive logistical coordination around adherence to safety protocols (e.g., required PPE, social distancing, hand washing, temperature checks, etc.). Face-to-face delivery will only be possible in a limited fashion.

With regard to academic programming being offered through remote delivery, additional consideration and planning has been invested into such things as: (1) good practice guidelines (see Appendix B); (2) technology and accessibility; and (3) needed support for faculty and instructors as they develop learning resources for their class offering.

Goal(s)

The University of Saskatchewan seeks to offer engaging and robust learning experiences across all our colleges and schools for undergraduate, graduate and non-credit students while maintaining the safety and security of all university members. The desire to optimize and elevate student achievement and student success is a key driver in our decision-making.
Resources/Supports

There are numerous people and units supporting the implementation plan for academic programming.

- TLSE units (including but not limited to Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning, Distance Education Unit, Media Production, Strategic Enrolment Management)
  - Extensive web-based resources are available to support faculty, instructors with development and delivery, and to support students in their learning and development.
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement (and Office)
- Vice-Provost, Faculty Relations
- University Library (including Student Learning Services)
- Residences (and other ancillary services including but not limited to the Bookstore)
- Procurement
- Student Leaders
- Facilities (Services)
- Safety Resources

This planning work is being done with strong connection to the PRT, the Advisory Hub, and the COT. It is important to note that the adoption and support of a new learning management system (Canvas) stands as an added resource to this segment of the Implementation Plan given the expectation that Canvas is easier to use and has better functionality for the university’s needs. Although the university will continue to support BlackBoard as a tool for those who wish to use it for a long transition period, early signs about the appeal of Canvas from faculty and students are promising.

Roles and Responsibilities

In the “Process” section of the University’s Framework for Increased Activity, there is clear insight about how decisions are made that are relevant to the implementation planning (see Appendix B of the Framework for decisions around mode of class delivery).

- Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning, and the Student Experience (VP-TLSE) serves as the Provost’s designate in leading the academic planning for the fall of 2020
  - The VP-TLSE is also responsible for organizing and mobilizing any and all needed supports from within the TLSE
- Planning sub-groups (Associate Deans Academic/Students; Associate Deans Research/Graduate Studies; some graduate chairs)
  - Have been following principles approved by PEC within the COVID-19 Phase II Task Force recommendations and now included within the Implementation Plan
  - Provided advice on how decisions about class delivery should be made
  - Collect and represent information on program requirements for 2020-21 with a particular focus on identifying classes offered remotely versus classes where the recommendation for consideration by the dean is for in-person delivery
  - Assist in developing elements of the logistics plan where courses are recommended to be delivered in-person
Identify and facilitate supports needed for faculty and instructors in the development of learning resources

- On the basis of recommendations from department heads, deans make decisions regarding the delivery format of classes for the fall of 2020.
- COT (representatives) provide logistical guidance related to the delivery of classes in a face-to-face format
- PRT provides advice to the VP-TLSE on all matters related to the Implementation Plan and a representative from PRT will provide direct input into the Academic Advisory group that looks at consistency, coordination and logistics for face-to-face delivery
- USSU Executive members providing insights and guidance and will participate in task groups that emerge from the Implementation Plan

**Key Assumptions**

- Enhanced learning experiences and a richness in student life is possible in the current environment
- The University of Saskatchewan will achieve a high quality of learning experience through remote delivery and it is entirely possible to deliver on diverse learning outcomes, including experiential learning, through virtual channels. Creativity, solution-finding and new energy are required at this time.
- For the fall of 2020 (and potentially into the winter of 2021), remote delivery is the safest approach and as such where we can deliver programming remotely, we should be delivering remotely.
  - Perceptions of safety on campus during the pandemic are a key decision driver for students and for parents (as seen in national survey data shared by Universities Canada)
- In-person delivery will only be approved and implemented when necessary and only when safeguards can be guaranteed. Our processes for implementing face-to-face classes will need to adhere to provincial public health guidelines.
  - Decisions to offer classes in a face-to-face format must focus on the learning outcomes and the type of learning and will not be based on class size.
  - Different types of learning were considered as possible candidates for face-to-face delivery but were not automatically granted in-person delivery standing given other necessary considerations (e.g., space needs, logistical feasibility). These types included for example:
    - hands on use of specialist equipment or artefacts, (e.g., lab)
    - use of specialist software
    - direct interaction with people/animals (e.g., performance, lab)
    - experience in purpose-dedicated space (e.g., performance related, studio)
    - experience in specialist location (e.g., field)
- Some of the decisions about learning opportunities are outside the university’s control (e.g., clinical placement in and outside the hospital, school practicum).
- Communication with stakeholders, general and students in particular, is critical. The sooner the university can share information about how the fall will look, the better off we will be in terms of encouraging enrolment and reducing anxieties. Given that remote delivery does not require...
permission, it makes sense to share what we know when we can (e.g., announcements about first-year direct entry).

- This communications work will be undertaken through a variety of sources and channels including the TLSE and central communications, as well as colleges and the Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement.

- We will not shift strategies in the middle of the term from remote to in-person delivery thereby requiring students to move to Saskatoon (or another USask campus) without appropriate time for students to plan.

- As we consider and predict enrolment declines for varying reasons, we must put renewed energy into activities and initiatives that encourage enrolment.

- Using the principles of the student learning and development cycle we assume that different students will need different things from us for the fall and winter, and this period of a pandemic is no exception. Separate and focused working groups have turned their attention to:
  - Students will require new types of supports from us and will need to receive these supports in both old and new ways.
  - Certain students, including but not limited to Indigenous and international students, will need continued attention to ensure they receive the right supports at the right times.
  - In-coming recent graduates of high school may need our support in different ways given the truncated nature of their Grade 12 year.

- We work in partnership with student leaders and associations when it comes to building robust student life. The USSU is actively engaged in discussions on student life and addressing potential challenges for students.

- Regardless of the plan for academic programming in the fall, we will need to be ready to step back from all in-person delivery if health circumstances shift and enhanced restrictions become necessary.

- Adequate technology and access are key for students to be successful.

- As we complete our planning for the fall, there is a pressing need to also make decisions about and plan for winter 2021 (beyond December 2020).

**Plan/Logistics**

- Course inventories across all health science programs *(Appendix D for example)* and for graduate program offerings have been used to identify: (1) any course where there is a proposed need for in-person delivery so that further analysis could be undertaken, (2) any course offered remotely that might need a “more-than-typical” level of support for the instructor to build and deliver. In undergraduate direct entry colleges and in law the compilation of needed information about (1) and (2) above has happened under the oversight of the college leadership.
The logistics for in-person delivery:

- Based on advice and guidance from COT, we need to determine a set of standard “rules” when it comes to in-person delivery. This will include leveraging the Short CoVID-19 Health and Safety Online Course, as well as symptoms checklists and/or screening questions, and cleaning logs.

- Together with COT and PRT supports, we need to develop a plan regarding use of buildings and spaces within buildings. Some of the key areas identified immediately for fall program delivery include (but are not limited to):
  - Clinical Learning Resource Centre
  - Health Sciences Building
  - Veterinary Medicine Hospital and building

- Attention is also required to evaluate and support students who are completing degree requirements offsite of the university campus (e.g., practicum experiences). Recommendations and guidelines for these academic experiences are being developed for use by academic units.

The logistics for remote delivery:

- We have been working on a multi-level plan regarding remote access and technology plans for the following groups:
  - Rural and remote students (with a particular focus on Indigenous students living on reserve)
  - International students in China

- Continued work to support faculty in learning resource development and remote delivery (e.g., use of technology, options within remote delivery, building tools, demonstrating tools, assisting with the development of new content).

- Continued work to support student success in an on-line environment (e.g., front end modules developed by Student Learning Services and the Distance Education Unit about how to be successful in a remote class).

- In response to the abrupt end to the 2019-20 academic year for high school students, one element of our enhanced student supports will be to provide “modules” in three sciences and math over the summer months. This opportunity will position students for success in first year by providing curriculum designed to give confidence in content mastery prior to commencing first year study.

The logistics of supports to students (online and potentially in-person depending on public health regulations):

- We need to determine which support services must be open on-site as part of the Framework for Increasing Activity and there needs to be some prioritization around which of the support services would remain as remote offerings.

- Prepare to respond to the return of students onto campus and determine the appropriate ordering for re-opening in person (subject to approvals).

- When the number of international and Indigenous students on campus starts to increase, we need to explore access to the centres. We need to be sure to serve the needs of these students while also
recognizing that our centres are gathering spaces (that we may not be able to use as gathering spaces for the near future).

- We will want to have places for student communities to come together for academic, social, and ceremonial purposes, but they need to be virtual not physical gatherings for a period of time.

- As it becomes possible, we need to be looking to create suitable and safe study spaces (e.g., Main Library) and the University Library will be engaged in planning around increased activity.

**Timelines and Deliverables**

- End of May to very early June – work completed in terms of identifying programming needs for remote and in-person classes (i.e., all course inventories returned, direct entry college decision completed for UG programs).
- May to June – communicate to students where decisions to offer programming remotely have been determined.
- When possible – communicate to students where decisions have been made to offer programming in face-to-face mode.
- First two weeks of June – confirm and solidify logistical planning for any in-person delivery requests.
- June 4 to June 30 - Registration windows open and students enrol in classes (Appendix D)
- June to August – support faculty and staff who are developing learning resources.

**External Relations/Partnerships**

- City of Saskatoon
- Post-Secondary Counsellors (FSIN)
- FSIN and Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Leadership, Saskatoon Tribal Council, Prince Albert Grand Council Leadership
- School Boards
- Health practitioners who host our students in clinic placements (outside the SHA)
- Other external partners who host our students in practicum settings
- SHA
- Medical Health Officer
- IRCC and provincial government colleagues focused on international students

**Research**

**Introduction**

Over the spring and summer, we will increase time-sensitive research activity on campus as outlined in the *Framework for a Staged Approach to Increasing Activity in University Spaces*. What research activity on campus looks like in the fall will largely build on what we are able to enable in the intervening months, in keeping with provincial public health directives, and respecting the realities and various demands on university supplies and resources.
**Goal(s)**

For research, we have two primary goals:

1) Keep everyone involved in research healthy and safe, while increasing research activity in a staged approach as health and safety becomes easier to maintain; and

2) Continually strive to allow as much research activity as possible to proceed, while respecting the necessary limits required by the evolving situation, and while understanding the potential to return to stricter limits should the situation require.

**Resources/Supports**

*On-campus research:*

- Resources (these have already been prepared for use over the spring and summer, and will be refined as needed going into the fall):
  - CoVID-19 Safety Permit Application for Increased Activity;
  - Short CoVID-19 Health and Safety Online Course;
  - Lab Safety Manual – CoVID-19 Pandemic Supplement;
  - Research Facility Re-Opening Checklist;
  - Symptom Self-Monitoring Checklist;
  - Cleaning Log; and
  - Clear and transparent process[es] for determining which activities can proceed.

- Ancillary supports and services:
  - Facilities – providing maintenance and custodial operations and other facility services necessary to allow research activity to proceed while meeting enhanced requirements for cleaning and physical distancing;
  - Procurement – optimizing purchasing activities at a time of significant supply-chain disruption to meet the supply needs of approved research projects;
  - Safety Resources – conducting lab inspections, approving biosafety and radiation permits, providing hazardous waste-management services, and assisting researchers in implementing appropriate safety procedures;
  - Animal Care Services and Animal Order Desk – approving and overseeing all animal-based research, coordinating all logistics related to ordering and transporting research animals, delivering animal care services in various university facilities and providing animal-welfare and animal-handling training; and
  - University Library – providing access to physical materials including the creation of procedures for contact-less pick-up of requested material and potentially a “scan-and-send” service for portions of books following fair-dealing guidelines.

*Field work:*

- [Field-work decision tree and expectations guide](#) – this has been in use since April 2020 and other institutions (e.g., UBC) have asked to copy it. We will update this as the pandemic and associated public health directives evolve over the coming months.
Remote research (i.e., from home):

- “Researching Remotely” webpage – developed by the OVPR, University Library and ICT, with support from communications, this page lists various resources and links to assist researchers. In the lead-up to the fall, we will be expanding this to create a one-stop shop for researchers to access all programs, services and supports (including documents and forms) relevant to them throughout the research lifecycle.
- The OVPR, the University Library and ICT will collaborate to deliver virtual workshops and guidance documents to inspire and inform researchers about the kinds of research activities they can undertake remotely (e.g., systematic reviews, meta-analysis, use of new technology).

Other and/or additional resources may also become necessary or be identified as implementation progresses.

Roles and Responsibilities

Decision-making process regarding increased research activity:

1. Deans/Executive Directors (EDs): Deans and EDs will approve and prioritize requests from their colleges, schools and centres, using whatever process they deem best to make those determinations.
2. COT: The COT will review the Dean/ED-approved applications, to ensure plans are as safe and effective as possible, and that they can be appropriately supported with university supplies and resources.
3. PRT Research Advisory Committee: Darcy Marciniuk, Irena Creed, Dion Martens, Christopher Martin and representatives from the Associate Deans of Research will undertake a final review the COT-approved applications to ensure coordination and coherence across campus. This committee will ensure PRT and the VPR are kept informed of decisions and will engage with PRT, the VPR and/or PEC should any disputes or significant questions emerge.

Other key roles/responsibilities:

- All ancillary services and supports identified (see above - Resources/Supports).
- The OVPR will undertake and synchronize various other roles/responsibilities including:
  - Supporting pre- and post-award administration, including liaising with funding agencies and industry partners; supporting the Research Ethics Boards in reviewing and adapting to changing research environments and methods, while ensuring adherence to all relevant ethics requirements, and informing and assisting faculty and staff in similarly adapting.
  - Determining how best to assist researchers with community-engaged research in a physical-distancing era.
  - Working with Procurement and Facilities to enable ongoing research-infrastructure development.
  - Re-evaluating the proof-of-concept fund and exploring other measures to help spark increased prototyping and other pre-commercialization activities and mitigating challenges of addressing legal and IP considerations for CoVID-related research which started at an accelerated pace.
Outlining implications and potential solutions for maintaining productive international collaborations, while exploring potential new opportunities.

Promoting and celebrating USask’s varied contributions to CoVID-19 research.

Key Assumptions

- Researchers will be increasingly impatient as this situation extends and there will be amplified pressure to allow for more (or even all) research activity to proceed.
- Tri-Agencies will continue to be quite flexible, but not all other funding partners will be able to be as flexible.
- Many industry and non-profit partners will see significant negative effects on their revenues, workforce and investment positions, presenting difficulties for sponsored research (already, some private-sector partners are needing to adjust payment schedules for research agreements).
- Fee-for-service revenues in various units on campus (e.g., SK Structural Sciences Centre) will be affected by both restricted activity on campus and adverse economic effects on industry users.
- Reduced research activity will result in fewer inventions and disclosures for commercial evaluation.
- USask may be a significant player in CoVID breakthroughs, especially given VIDO-InterVac’s leading role in developing and testing vaccines and therapeutic treatments.

Plan/Logistics

- The activity-approval process is outlined (see above - Decision-making process regarding increased research activity).
- As stated in the introduction, on-campus research activity in the fall will largely build on what we are in a position to allow over the spring and summer, in keeping with public health directives and respecting the various demands on university supplies and resources.

Timelines and Deliverables

- All documents, forms and the online safety course are already prepared (and will be refined as needed)
- The approval process is in place and will be carried forward into the fall.
- We are ready to move forward – with approval we will begin to implement as outlined.

External Relations/Partnerships

- Provincial government – keeping them appropriately informed of our contributions to COVID-19 research, our actions to increase research activity, and our alignment with the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan.
- Funding agencies – liaising with funding agencies for all pre- and post-award activities, including extension requests.
- Industry and non-profit partners – liaising with industry and non-profit partners, including for changes to funding arrangements.
• Additional post-secondary institutions – coordinating activities, learning from the experiences of other institutions, and demonstrating leadership by sharing our own insights, processes, documents, etc.
• Others as outlined and synchronized by our communications plan (see below), including Indigenous government and organizations.

Governance

Introduction and Goal(s)

From the first emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the university strongly committed to ensuring the continuance of its core governance functions, which are essential for achieving its mission as well as strategic and operational success—this goal remains for the duration of the current circumstances and throughout the transition toward increased on-campus activity.

Resources/Supports

Responsibility for the university’s governance functions remain primarily within the purview of the Office of the University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer; however, this is a collaborative and collegial process in partnership with:
• The representatives/members of each of the three governing bodies (Board of Governors, Senate, and University Council)
• The governing bodies’ respective executive committees
• University administration/leadership

And in cooperation with / informed by:
• Pandemic Response Team (PRT)
• Office of the Vice-Provost Faculty Relations

Roles and Responsibilities

This remains largely the same: https://secretariat.usask.ca/index.php

Key Assumptions

• Every effort will be made to maintain the core governance functions of the university in order to guide and support its academic, financial, community engagement, and strategic endeavours, such that the “what” of these functions will continue even when the “how” must be adapted to any given scenario.
• Even under the most restrictive pandemic scenarios that might be encountered (but are not currently anticipated), some ongoing operative governance functions will be required.
• Prolonged remote decision-making and absence of interaction and deliberation, will risk detriments to the relationships among and between governing bodies and the university, and may erode trust
and engagement. Thus, maintaining engagement is an explicit focus and communication in all its forms will be an essential means to mitigating an erosion of governance integrity and functioning.

- Our ability to demonstrate that our governing bodies can continue/facilitate decision making under even the most challenging circumstances (and do so in a way that is timely, responsive, and responsible) will contribute to our positive public reputation and trust.

- All governing bodies (and the majority of their committees) represent groups larger than 10 people; Senate and Council each have more than 100 members. Even under a ‘blended’ or ‘gradual return’ scenario, these bodies are unlikely to be permitted to meet in-person for an extended period of time.

- In deciding on alternative formats and platforms through which to hold meetings, engage in discussion, and perform all of the governance functions, we must strive for balance among potentially contending factors, including but not limited to:
  
  - Increased demands on members of our governing bodies and committees, resource and support staff that are realized in the transition to remote work environments (e.g., increased workloads overall, caregiver/parenting/home educator duties, etc.) and a need for greater flexibility
  - Benefits and limitations of online meeting platforms (e.g., opportunity for synchronous discussion of issues versus interrupted or unreliable transmission due to technical difficulties or bandwidth issues; usability of platforms versus security concerns; suitability or effectiveness of platforms/formats for large groups; members’ and chairs’ preferences and/or level of comfort and familiarity with format; unequal access)

- Onboarding of new members, committee representatives, and leaders within the governing bodies (which will happen due to natural annual turnover effective July 1, but will be realized more fully at the start of the Fall semester) may be challenged commensurate with the degree of remote functioning required; innovative and different approaches will be needed, and deliberate succession in leadership roles will be essential.

- Some ‘discretionary’ activities (e.g., Senate education committee, which generally uses interactive large-group discussions) will need to be put on hold, with efforts undertaken to maintain relationships and engagement.

- Regardless of the degree of in-person contact, the governing bodies represent an important conduit to the university and broader communities, and can provide opportunities for advocacy, support, and advice.

**Plan/Logistics**

As all governing bodies are N>10; Senate and Council N>100. Governing bodies will likely not be permitted meet in-person for some time. Thus, the majority of communications and processes will remain digital/remote into the fall. Most circumstances have been, and can continue to be through the fall, handled via ‘normal’ decision and authority pathways, with some adjustments to process (i.e., electronic) and timelines.
There are roughly three categories of situations relevant now and into fall, vis-à-vis governance and decision-making:

1. Emergency (e.g., COVID-19 related) situations that must be dealt with immediately and thus clearly justify use of ‘emergency measures’ and deviations from normal decision processes and/or use of delegations of authority.

2. Situations arising from current (i.e. COVID-19 related) circumstances that are urgent but could follow ‘normal’ processes, although these may require adjusted timelines or other modifications.

3. Urgent items that arise, but are not emergency circumstances (e.g., in this case, are not COVID-19 related) and therefore have little justification for ‘emergency measures.’

(A delegations of authority summary is available from the Office of the University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer (OUS), with examples of each of the above including the pathways for decision making.)

Some form of enhanced interactivity (while remaining mindful of the bandwidth and associated demands of ‘higher-tech’ approaches to large meetings) is desirable for richer deliberations and engagement. We will thus be seeking to implement practical approaches to increase the extent of synchronous communication that can enable deliberation/dialogue for virtual meetings of governing bodies. We will also ensure that we engage in regular, purposeful, and transparent communications with Board, Senate, and Council beyond the ‘regular business’ of meetings.

Some committees, working groups, as well as student appeals and hearings may be able to meet in person once we are advised that it is appropriate to do so (based on guidelines and policies of government, Saskatchewan Health Authority, PRT and COT). Until that time, all will proceed as they have been in winter/spring 2020, via adapted virtual processes.

Likewise, collegial processes continue, and are completed remotely as they have been through winter/spring 2020, until advised otherwise (authority is the Board, but delegated to Colleges and guided by collective agreement).

Fall convocation is unlikely to occur as an in-person gathering (N>100). Final decisions will need to be made in this regard by late August/early September.

Timelines and Deliverables

- **May/June:** Board and its committees meet remotely. Council continues to meet asynchronously, as decided by its Coordinating Committee, using email for Q&A (posted for members) and electronic voting ballots for decision items. Council committees meet remotely based on members’ preferences and needs.

- **July/August:** Board and its committees meet remotely. Council and Senate are not scheduled to meet. Orientation and succession efforts are underway. The Coordinating Committee of Council and/or Senate Executive Committee may be called upon to discuss or advise upon Council matters, or to provide oversight in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Decision required about Fall convocation.
• September onward: Board and its committees meet remotely. After additional consultation with members regarding their preferences and capabilities, Council and its committees may meet remotely (revert to asynchronous if most appropriate and reliable). Additional consultation with Senate members as to preferences, capabilities, and access to alternative meeting platforms (revert to asynchronous if most appropriate and reliable).

Operations and Facilities

Introduction

Operations and facilities will focus on what the spaces and services on-campus will require for the resumption of on-campus activity.

Goal(s)

To support a consistent and centralized response to increased activity ensuring the safety of faculty, staff, and students.

Resources/Supports

Services Portfolio (Facilities, Protective Services, Parking Services, Consumer Services and Connection Point) and SPO Office (EPMO, IPLD, FRAN, Shared Services).

Roles and Responsibilities

Providing the logistical framework specific to facilities and resources to assist colleges and units in their delivery of the academic mission.

Key Assumptions

• Alignment with the Provincial Re-Open Plan parameters and restrictions as set out by the Chief Medical Health Officer.
• Increased on-campus activity is deemed critical and necessary to support the strategic priorities of the university.

Planning and Logistics

• Develop resource requirement checklist for return of on-campus activity (COT work, security patrol needs) - completed
• Develop capital program for building and service requirements based on Provincial public health guidelines (traffic flow, cleaning regime, signage and directional indicators, barriers and protective screens, entries, exits, removal of furniture) – occurring and completed by September 1
• Develop access inventory (including type of access required) and monitoring (what spaces have been utilized and for how long) – occurring
Fall Hybrid Implementation Plan

- Develop response protocol for CoVID-19 positive case on campus - completed
- Map labour resources to buildings – occurring and completed by September 1
- Continue to evaluate existing capital projects to determine whether on-site activity proceeds, to support teaching and research activities, and university operations – occurring and ongoing
- Develop a re-open plan for ancillary services in support of student success (residence, culinary, parking, retail) – June and ongoing.

External Relations/Partnerships

Contracts with vendors (food deliveries), Colliers (residences), Minister of Health, external design for signage.

Technology

Introduction

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) must support the technology needs of both the resumption of on-campus activity as well as remote academic, research, and administrative activity. ICT resources will be remote when possible but will have presence on-campus commensurate with the service delivery needs.

Goal(s)

- Collaborate with academic, research, and administrative stakeholders to develop strategies and solutions that will provide a high-quality hybrid experience for students, grad students, faculty, and staff.
- Support digital learning and discovery by developing training materials and resources.
- Support the on-campus experience (teaching, learning, research, and administration).
- Identify and address privacy and security issues related to changes required within the technology landscape.
- Adhere to enterprise architecture principles as well as the principles of the fall implementation plan.

Resources/Supports

To achieve our goals, ICT will need:

- To be engaged in planning for academic program delivery that is remote vs on-campus.
- To be engaged in planning research activity that will remain remote.
- Safety guidelines/proper safety and PPE equipment and supplies required for staff provide in-person support when on campus.
Roles and Responsibilities

- ICT teams (including academic tech, service desk, classroom support, college coordinators) will need to be on-campus at least part-time to support faculty in preparing for remote delivery in addition to supporting on-campus teaching and research activities.
- Data centre operations, network operations, customer/support service (A/V/Desktop support) staff will have at least some full-time presence on-campus.

Key Assumptions

- International students learning or researching remotely may not be able to fully participate in learning and research activity due to political/technical/financial barriers.
- Rural and remote students (including Indigenous students living on reserve) may require additional supports to overcome technology and connectivity challenges.
- On-campus support needs for research will increase as research returns to campus. In addition, ICT may be required to provide new solutions and more support as researchers change their remote discovery methods.
- Teaching and learning: Along with the building plans we will need to map which computer labs are accessible for course work. A logistics plan will need to be in place. Access to technology-enabled classrooms will be necessary for recording online courses, some support for home/remote recording will also be necessary.
- To plan for technical capacity, we will assume enrolment levels for the fall/winter term are consistent with prior years.
- College and department offices and large student areas will be generally be closed.
- Paper processes will need to be changed to digital.
- Support will be primarily remote.
- International travel bans will prevent many collaborators from coming to Saskatoon, and the campus community from outbound travel, resulting in an increased need for collaboration tools.
- In-person conference attendance will be restricted requiring technical supports to attend.

Planning and Logistics

- ICT will continue to participate in research and academic planning groups with a goal of building a comprehensive yet concise academic and research technology toolkit that will address the emerging needs of faculty and researcher.
- Technical support will be required to change admin processes to digital.
- A prioritization mechanism will need to be in place as there will be more requests for new technology or changes in technology than ICT could handle at once.
• ICT will support and sustain existing IT services, but this will need to be balanced with the emerging needs of teaching, learning and research.

• ICT will expedite specific projects required to deliver on the hybrid model, such as the LMS rollout. Other project details available at https://www.usask.ca/avp-ict/initiatives/.

• We will continue to work on delivering excellent recruiting tools/supporting faculty with remote grad students.

Timelines and Deliverables

• LMS configured and ready to use by mid-June; onboarding colleges and departments and wide-scale use by September.

• Working, learning, and researching remotely sites will be primary tools for sharing information about technology supports and resources.
  - Technology self-help materials (e.g. decision trees) for all faculty, staff and students.
  - More focus on video tutorials; “smart” knowledge base articles.

• Communication and change management strategies to support remote working, learning and research.

External Relations/Partnerships

• Saskatchewan Research Network Inc. (SRNet), telephone companies, government ministries, Indigenous leadership (First Nations, Métis and Inuit), and others to identify opportunities for addressing accessibility challenges for remote students, faculty, staff, researchers (including Indigenous and rural).

• Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA): USask technology in SHA buildings/hospital. As SHA shifts protocol we need partner to protect staff while providing services.

• Maintain effective relationships with IT peers at other universities to look for sector wide solutions for supporting remote activities.

People and Resources

This includes Finance/Human Resources (HR)/Supply Chain/Safety (overall risk assessment).

Introduction

People and Resources must focus on the people, financial, safety and procurement services the campus will require to support the resumption of on-campus activity. People and Resources staff will be remote whenever possible but will have presence on campus commensurate with service delivery needs.

Goal(s)

• Collaborate with academic, research, and administrative stakeholders to identify safe, financially responsible and sustainable practices for all reopen activities that ensures an effective distribution of people and resources (on- and off-campus).
• Ensure an overarching strategy and appropriate longer-term support systems (health and wellness/wellbeing, leadership support) for continued remote working arrangements for a select group of the university workforce.

• Minimize CoVID-19 exposure and risk for anyone returning to campus.

• Monitor and model the ongoing financial impacts of CoVID-19 on USask to permit decision-making that supports the ongoing financial and operational sustainability of the institution.

Resources/Supports

To achieve our goals, People and Resources will need to:

• Understand workforce impacts and provide/implement enabling strategies to support effective on-campus reintegration strategies (of operations/services and associated employees). HR and Finance Strategic Business Advisors (SBAs) are key resources to this work.

• Develop remote working strategies and longer-term support systems (health and wellness/wellbeing, leadership supports) for a select group of the university workforce. Central HR Specialists and HR SBAs are key resources to this work.

• Understand the impacts on revenues and costs of our implementation strategy including consideration of both direct costs of the requesting unit and support costs of other units. These financial impacts need to be considered both for individual reopening initiatives and for the cumulative effect of all reopening activities. Funding sources for incremental costs will need to be clearly identified.

• Ensure support safety resources training, onsite inspections, and fire and life safety systems verifications are in place.

• Understand provincial and federal funding relief programs available to organizations and individuals and develop strategies that leverage these programs.

Roles and Responsibilities

To provide the logistical framework specific to People and Resources to assist colleges and units in their delivery of the academic mission that aligns with our phased implementation plan.

Key Assumptions

Alignment with the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan parameters and restrictions. Increased on-campus activity is deemed critical and necessary to support the strategic priorities of the university. Safety protocols and parameters are in place before on-campus activity resumes. Employees are willing and prepared to return and reintegrate in the delivery of on-campus operations/services. Union support exists for the university’s re-open planning and strategy.

Planning and Logistics

• Sustain and support staff engaged in existing People and Resources services.
• Enhance remote working protocols and engagement and health and wellness/wellbeing and leadership support strategies.
• Catalogue current and future supply chain for equipment and labour.
• Establish and maintain a six-month inventory of PPE.
• Establish an online ordering and delivery capability for PPE.
• Coordinate the various stores on campus to work collaboratively to support critical operations and the resumption of on-campus activities, including vetting new suppliers and mitigating shortages of commodities other than PPE.
• Maintain the full suite of procurement support to campus remotely, primarily through Connection Point, and continue to expand the scope of these services
• Explore and adopt measures to contain costs and inflation that has accelerated as a result of the CoVID-19 pandemic.
• Ensure CoVID-19 training is mandatory for all employees returning to campus.
• Exposure Control Plan tool to facilitate identification and control measures.
• Support procedures for PPE usage (mask, gloves, gowns, etc. as appropriate), hand washing, hand sanitizer, a Laboratory Safety Pandemic Supplement, and cleaning procedures (see above – Research, Resources/Supports)
• Continue to track and monitor cost implications related to our pandemic response and recovery.
• Continue to monitor and adjust/revise workforce strategies and programs to ensure ongoing support to, engagement of and productivity from employees, effective use and cost-management of people resources and continued compliance of collective agreements, legislation and policies.
• Identify and implement cost-containment initiatives to support the sustainability of resources and the institution.

External Relations/Stakeholders/Partnerships

• Maintain productive relationships with regulatory agencies and ensure compliance (OHS Regs, PHAC, CNSC, WCB, MWSLR)
• Maintain effective communications with unions and strategic partners (USFA, CUPE 1975, CLS, SHA, VIDO/InterVac)
• Maintain effective communication with government partners, including federal, provincial and Indigenous partners and regulators (MAE, Provincial Auditor, Moody’s)

Communications Plan

The PRT’s work is guided by a set of principles, one of which is:
Communicate with our community. We will share our CoVID-19 status, plans, and actions around increased activity with internal and external stakeholders to ensure transparency and timeliness.

Periods of uncertainty and rapid change require clear and ongoing communication, and this comprehensive communications plan will be implemented to ensure the work of the PRT is highly visible and understood throughout the campus community and all stakeholders.

Communications goals:

- Clearly define the spring/summer/fall scenarios and all campus status changes.
- Build awareness and understanding to the decision-making parameters and process.
- Provide clear, concise communications to all target audiences and stakeholders that addresses their respective concerns and questions.
- Provide consistent messaging in all communications, built from the content on the primary communications channels (single source of content).
- Design and deliver communication materials that are on brand.

Audiences/Stakeholders:

- Key information will be segmented by “core” USask audience groups
- From this key information, appropriate communications will be derived and targeted to the many other USask stakeholder groups

### Types of information to be communicated:

- PRT structure, mandate, and decision-making principles
- PRT decisions
- Campus status
- Academic program changes and details
- Campus rules and regulations
- Upcoming changes
- Frequently asked questions
• Milestones/timelines:
  o Fall implementation plan
  o Each re-opening phase
  o Other key milestones (TBD)

Frequency:
• Primarily weekly updates, with important information or changes posted as required (hourly or daily).

Channels:
• Primary channel for Core Audiences/Stakeholders: The focal point (single source) of all PRT communications will be the Updates Website, supported by email, PAWS, social media, USask News, and on-campus signage
  o Everything that needs to be known about USask plans, actions, and updates will be found on the updates site (or linked from it)
  o Secondary channels used when and where appropriate
  o All channels will be utilized as deemed best for each respective audience group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMARY</th>
<th>SECONDARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRT Updates Website*</td>
<td>Media releases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>Person to person calls/discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emails</td>
<td>President’s messages (bi-weekly)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAWS alerts</td>
<td>Op-Eds (as required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>USask News</td>
<td>Virtual townhalls (as required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>Senate/Council/Board presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College/Huskie websites</td>
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<td>Off-campus messaging (primarily ads)</td>
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</tbody>
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Team Composition and Deployment:
• The PRT Communications Team structure will mirror that of the PRT/PRT Advisory hub:
  o Dedicated communications resources embedded within each primary PRT working group (specific communications resources to be identified)
    ▪ Additional communications resources assigned to support the Advisory Hub and other stakeholder groups
    ▪ Overlap of Core Audiences and Stakeholders responsibilities where appropriate
  o All report in to the PRT lead - Communications (AVP, Communications)
PRT Communications supported and facilitated with dedicated MS Team site for ongoing updates, files sharing, document storage, etc.

- Full PRT Communications group meets weekly to ensure coordination and consistency of messaging
- Central Comms will manage the PRT Updates site, core messaging, and design.

**Stakeholder Feedback**

As noted in the specific plans, a complex network of people from across the institution have provided considerable input and guidance in preparing this implementation plan. Discussion with external stakeholders have been extensive, including the provincial government and post-secondary sector partners.

As we move forward with this plan, we intend to continue to engage our campus community and meet (or meet again in some instances) with campus community groups, including Dean’s Council, Faculty Council Chairs, student leaders, Associate Deans Academic, and Associate Deans Research.

External stakeholders that the university will reach out to further discuss these plans will include:

- The City of Saskatoon
- Continued engagement with the provincial government
- Indigenous partners and organizations
- Business community organizations

**Timelines for Approval/Delivery**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft Implementation Plan submitted to PEC</td>
<td>May 29, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEC approves Draft Implementation Plan</td>
<td>June 4, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further engagement/stakeholder feedback received</td>
<td>June 5 – 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updated Implementation Plan submitted to PEC</td>
<td>June 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of Implementation Plan</td>
<td>June – September 2020</td>
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Appendix A: Decision Tree for Remote vs F2F Delivery

**Decision tree for remote vs F2F delivery for fall 2020**

Types of learning activities that a faculty member/instructor undertakes where face-to-face might be considered necessary:
- hands on use of specialist equipment or artefacts, (e.g., lab)
- use of specialist software
- direct interaction with people/animals (e.g., performance, lab, practicum)
- experience in purpose-dedicated space (e.g., performance related, studio)
- experience in specialist location (e.g., field)

---

**Does this learning activity enable achievement/demonstration of an essential course learning outcome(s) (i.e. does it contribute to development of essential skills for the program and/or is a prerequisite for future courses)?**

*YES*

*NO → Drop that component of the course, adjust learning outcomes*

---

**Can the learning activity be undertaken outside the campus environment (e.g. off site access to software) ensuring that public health requirements are upheld if activities are replicated in ones home or community?**

*NO*

*YES → Make arrangements for activity off campus in ways that fit public health requirements*

---

**Can the learning outcomes be achieved via a similar process/experience in a virtual environment or via a virtual simulation?**

*NO*

*YES → Proceed with designing this experience for the course*

---

**Can the course or this learning activity be delayed until there is enough public health advances to lift quarantine indefinitely (e.g. vaccine, widespread testing, etc.) without significant disruption to student progress?**

*NO*

*YES → Delay the course offering*

---

**Devises a plan for F2F in line with all safety protocols required (small groups, distancing, cleaning protocols, PPE) for approval by Dean or designate**
Appendix B: Good Practice Guidelines for Remote Teaching

These guidelines are intended to inform your planning process and teaching practice for the fall of 2020. In considering these guidelines, it is important to note that we are all learning together through this period and, much like with your face-to-face (F2F) teaching, it will take time to develop teaching skills in a new environment. We recognize your time and effort in planning and teaching your course in the best way possible for your learners this fall.

There are many supports available to you. We are here to work with you as you plan and undertake teaching.

Consider the COVID-19 Context

All learning happens in a context that shapes one’s ability to engage and learn. Circumstances for learners and faculty in the fall of 2020 will continue to be complex and uncertain. These circumstances impact some learners more than others, and raise new issues of equity in our learning environments (e.g. variability in connectivity for rural and on reserve learners, accessibility for learners with a disability).

- **Be Flexible**: Develop a plan for how you can be flexible around assignments, assessments, and deadlines. Allow flexibility for learners to access content and participate in learning experiences at their own pace. Consider recording any synchronous activities for learners who may be unable to participate.
- **Provide Choice**: Choice in learning will help mitigate some of the equity issues (e.g. some choice in frequency and mode of participation, provision of assignment options).
- **Be Compassionate**: Approach your learners with compassion and understanding regarding their circumstances. Communicating caring and flexibility whenever you can will reduce student anxiety and increase learning.
- **Be Remote Ready**: Ensure you are familiar with your computer and the technology you are using. Practice beforehand if possible and if you are experiencing any difficulty, contact ICT for support.

> I really enjoy the Student Response System feed as it gives students the ability to ask questions as they would be able to if the class was in person. As well it has a nice community feeling to it, which is a huge positive for my mental health.

USask student Winter 2020 feedback

1. Create your Course Framework

- **Take inventory**: Gather and reflect on your teaching practices, learning & lecture materials, and the learning activities you used in your face-to-face course. Also consider your assessment plan and how you provided feedback and connected with learners.
- **Confirm your course outcomes**: Review the learning outcomes in your existing course. Ensure these clearly articulate the things you want students to be able to do at the end of your remote course.
- **Outline a clear and consistent structure**: A typical structure includes weekly segmented sections of content broken into chunks called *learning modules*.

> Having lectures that were narrated was especially effective; I wish all my classes had that! Posting interactive exercises which were instantly graded was also a good way to practice course content.

USask student Winter 2020 feedback
2. Build your Remote Course

For each learning module:

A. Identify desired outcomes
B. Create active learning experiences & engage learners
C. Plan for assessment and provision of feedback

- Activate prior knowledge: Think about how you can help learners connect the ideas you will present and discuss to their previous experiences and/or learning. Positioning your course in relation to what learners already know helps with engagement, knowledge retention, and deeper learning. (e.g. create visuals showing connections between ideas, build in questions that ask learners to think about or share what they know about the subject, begin a course/learning module with prompts like ‘have you ever wondered why...?’ that connect the subject matter to familiar experiences).

- Plan and integrate structured activities where learners engage, think, create and do: Learners should be able to practice skills or complete tasks that will help them become better at what you want them to learn. When planning learner activities think about the time they would put into a face-to-face course and check your expectations in the remote context.

> The instructor posted all our notes and PowerPoints as well as created a discussion board so we are able to comment and talk about today’s lecture and answer questions based on it. This still gives us a chance to interact with one another and read what others are saying about the material.

USask student Winter 2020 feedback

- Create opportunities for connection and interaction: Build opportunities for connection and interaction into your course design (e.g. have learners create profiles within the course, send a pre-course email survey on interests and goals for the course, have a course lounge, create smaller student groups for discussions, assignments).

> The discussion boards were actually a good tool to learn from my peers and get additional perspective on textbook materials.

USask student Winter 2020 feedback

- Check student understanding regularly: This can be done at the start of a course and throughout using brief assessments or through the active learning where learners practice activities or skills you wish them to learn (these could be for marks but do not need to be). These can be used to adapt your learning activities where there appears to be a broad lack of understanding or a consistent knowledge gap amongst student in the course. This approach also allows you to point groups of learners having more difficulty toward additional resources or learning opportunities focused on the topic of issue.

- Provide quality, timely, and early feedback: This helps establish your presence and build trust. Providing opportunities for peer feedback helps establish richer learning communities, engages learners in understanding assessment criteria and expectations, and reduces the time needed for instructor feedback.

- Create accessible summative assessments: Guidelines are forthcoming that will consider efficiency, academic integrity, accessibility and evidence-informed assessment practice, including the technological tools needed to facilitate it. These are being drafted based on input and reflections from Winter 2020.

> The ability to complete weekly online quizzes and 3 remote assignments that were previously embedded into this course made me stay on track during the pandemic.

USask student Winter 2020 feedback
3. Connect and check-in with learners regularly

- **Consider what student learning you want to facilitate through your presence:** Plan how you wish to use your time (e.g. answer questions, discuss a topic, work through a problem/case, provide feedback). It is important that you connect with learners through your activity in the virtual space. In considering how much time you dedicate to each course, think about the time you would be present for a face-to-face class (office hours, responding to queries, providing feedback, etc.) as a minimum.

- **Provide frequent, clear and consistent communication:** Provide clear directions to learners about your course and expectations for engagement. Prior to the first class, introduce yourself and clarify the first steps (e.g. click through the course, review the syllabus, calendarize assignments and assessments). Start each week with a post listing the outcomes for the week, specific instructions related to learning activities, and reminders about tasks/assignments that need to be completed. Explanations of why you are asking them to do certain activities will increase engagement (e.g. I am asking you to watch this video because...). Remember - clearly communicated expectations for learners will limit time spent clarifying and allow you to dedicate your time to supporting learning.

  “During these tough times he always kept us up to date on his class and gave us time to prepare for assignments during these troubling times. He also gave us clear instructions on how he wanted it done and why each assignment was important.”

  *USask student Winter 2020 feedback*

- **Ask for feedback:** An online environment does not always allow you to pick up the cues from learners (e.g. body language) that would be present in a F2F environment. Teaching and learning remotely is new for everyone - asking learners for feedback about what is going well and what you could change allows you to adjust your course. This could be done via a short, anonymous survey, within Blackboard or Canvas, through mid-course SLEQ feedback, or via an open class discussion.

- **Check student participation:** Use the Blackboard or Canvas analytics to determine if learners are logging in regularly. If someone is not, a quick email inviting them to re-engage can make a big difference to the likelihood of completion. These analytics can also show you where learners are spending their time and help you understand patterns of activity.

  “Our group was able to call my instructor and have a thorough conversation regarding the assignment. Anything we discussed that was relevant to other groups was summarized and sent by email to all students. This was very beneficial.”

  *USask student Winter 2020 feedback*
Appendix C: Health Sciences Course Inventory
### Appendix D: Registration Windows for Fall 2020/09 and Winter 2021/01 Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>June 1 (Monday) – 8:30 AM</th>
<th>Manual registration and Huskie Athletics open to staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Group 2 | June 4 (Thursday) – 8:30 AM | All graduate students  
All non-degree certificate students |
| Group 3 | June 8 (Monday) – 7:30 AM | All years of Nursing, Nutrition, Pharmacy and Education students entering their third and fourth year |
| Group 4 | June 11 (Thursday) – 7:30 AM | Students entering the final year of their Arts and Science program |
| Group 5 | June 11 (Thursday) – 12:00 PM | Agriculture and Bioresources diploma transfer students, Agriculture and Bioresources, Edwards School of Business, Engineering, and Kinesiology (except transfer students), School of Environment and Sustainability (undergraduate) students entering final year and visiting Edwards school of Business students |
| Group 6 | June 13 (Saturday) – 9:30 AM | Arts and Science and Education students entering first year |
| Group 7 | June 13 (Saturday) – 12:00 PM | Agriculture and Bioresources, Edwards School of Business, Engineering, and Kinesiology (except transfer students), School of Environment and Sustainability (undergraduate) students entering first year |
| Group 8 | June 17 (Wednesday) – 7:30 AM | Students entering the third year of their Arts and Science program |
| Group 9 | June 17 (Wednesday) – 12:00 PM | Agriculture and Bioresources, Edwards School of Business, Engineering, and Kinesiology (except transfer students), School of Environment and Sustainability (undergraduate) students entering third year |
| Group 10 | June 22 (Monday) – 7:30 AM | Arts and Science and Education students entering second year |
| Group 11 | June 22 (Monday) – 12:00 PM | Agriculture and Bioresources, Edwards School of Business, Engineering, and Kinesiology, School of Environment and Sustainability (undergraduate) students entering second year, Kinesiology transfer students |
| Group 12 | June 23 (Tuesday) – 7:30 AM | All visiting students (except Edwards School of Business)  
All years of Dentistry, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine |
| Group 13 | Tuesday, June 30 – 12:00 PM | Law students entering second and third year (first year law students will continue to be registered manually by the college) |
Appendix E: Framework for a Staged Approach to Increasing Activity in University Spaces

To support the fall implementation plan, a framework has been developed that outlines a staged return to all activity at the university including research, teaching and learning, and support service operations that must be conducted in university spaces, including our physical campuses and university-operated properties and sites. The framework applies to activities involving faculty, staff, and students as well as any contractors. Given the broad range of university activity, this document will reference or highlight specific areas as needed.

As this staged increase progresses, we continue to encourage as much remote work as possible, recognizing the strains, additional caregiving, and other responsibilities we are experiencing right now. The framework document speaks to varying activities undertaken:

- References to teaching and learning are meant to include access to campus in order to develop learning resources (faculty, instructors, and support staff). Within the domain of academic programming, the process for making decisions about which classes will be delivered remotely and what exceptions will be made for face-to-face delivery are described in an appended flowchart.

- References to operations are meant to include operations, administration, capital projects and support services (in general). The term operations is used to cover a wide range of activities across colleges and administrative units.

- As one exception to this Framework approach, research at field locations outside of our physical campuses and university-operated field sites continues to be subject to our Field Work Decision Tree and Expectations Guide, which continues to be updated as the situation evolves.

The framework approach has been developed alongside the Re-open Saskatchewan Plan. We gratefully acknowledge insights from many other institutions in shaping this document, including other U15 institutions, the University of California system, the University of Washington, and King’s College London.

The framework can be accessed here.

Questions about the Framework document can be sent to Danette Stang (danette.stang@usask.ca).