

An Update on TRU Executive Priorities for 2020/21

A year ago, the executive identified 2020/21 as a year when we would focus on capacity-building and institutional resiliency. Little did we know these very attributes would be tested and developed through our response to a global pandemic.

Many of our previously identified priorities were either delayed or slowed in their progress, as we added new, more pressing priorities related to the pandemic—coordinating remote work and learning, leading development of the provincial *Go Forward Guidelines* for our sector, exercising financial prudence, addressing international recruitment concerns, and continually communicating with internal and external stakeholders regarding our pandemic response.

Still, we were able to complete our Strategic Enrolment Management Plan and open a new building for the School of Nursing, and make progress on other priorities including leadership development, the Limitless fundraising campaign, and new strategic plans for research and for Open Learning. The executive encourages the board to review the attached addendum which provides an overview of the 2020/21 priorities and their status. As with previous President's Reports, you'll find other updates below.

Institutional Resilience and Capacity-Building:

Leadership and culture

Leadership Updates—On Jan. 1, Donna Petri assumed the position of interim dean for the Faculty of Education and Social Work (EDSW) for eight months. During her interim dean appointment, Donna will also remain in her current role as associate vice-president academic and continue to provide leadership to the Office of Quality Assurance. Donna has been with TRU since 1990, teaching in the School of Nursing before serving as an associate dean from 2012 to 2016. In her role as associate vice-president academic, Donna played a key role in TRU's achievement of accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. She also provided guidance and leadership in the development of our Institutional Learning Outcomes and General Education Model, and led TRU through a successful Quality Assurance Process Audit.

The search for an associate vice-president students and dean, Faculty of Student Development is in its last stages with a short-list of candidates identified and an

announcement anticipated in the near future. This position will replace the current dean of students position, which was reevaluated and revised to align with similar roles across other post-secondary institutions. TRU is pleased with the calibre of candidates that have resulted from this national search.

Addressing Racism—The TRU Provost’s Anti-Racism Task Force has been established to better understand the needs of our campus communities—particularly from the perspective of racialized groups and Indigenous people—and to make recommendations that aim to make our campuses safer, more respectful and more equitable environments in which to learn, work, research and live. The task force is expected to deliver a summary report of its findings to the provost by March 31. The recommendations will be taken to the President’s Executive for approval.

From the discussions it has become evident that a key goal of the task force recommendations is to champion anti-racism and make racism visible as it appears in overt and subtle forms in our institution and surrounding community. TRU’s commitment to anti-racism needs to be visible, linked to TRU values and goals, concrete and measurable, balanced with de-centralized engagement and leadership commitment, support and guidance, as well as accountability at all levels. Discussions have highlighted a need for safe spaces for students, faculty and staff for support, dialogue, and resolution; building capacity for effective support for individuals and learning from experiences; creating a safe and reliable system for reporting; and providing the resources so that everyone who comes to TRU as student, faculty, or staff will become a champion for anti-racism. The task force is at the stage of gathering input from its members on five areas (data, education, policy, integration of anti-racism accountability in all university roles, and institutional structures) as actionable items in the short, medium and long terms, to organize the report.

Planning

Fall “return to campus” initiative—In January, Dr. Donna Murnaghan was appointed as special advisor to the provost to oversee planning for TRU’s fall semester. Recognizing that virtual learning has posed challenges for some students, our goal is that all students enrolled in TRU’s traditionally on-campus programs have an opportunity for some face-to-face instruction on one of our campuses. What that looks like will depend on each program area, and the result will be based on consultation involving representatives from across TRU, including students, faculty and staff.

Integrated Strategic Plan—Almost a year ago, TRU finalized a new [Vision Statement](#) that would guide the university for the next 10 years. It brought together a new vision, set of values, strategic change goals and our university mission. While the pandemic slowed our momentum, we are now ready to plan for how we operationalize the Vision Statement, and in particular our four strategic change goals:

- honour truth, reconciliation and rights
- lead in community research and scholarship
- design lifelong learning
- eliminate achievement gaps

This will all be captured in the development and implementation of a new Integrated Strategic Plan, which the provost will lead starting this spring.

SEM Plan—With TRU’s new Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) plan now in place as approved by the board in December, the SEM Task Force held its final meeting in January. The focus now is on establishing a SEM steering committee which will oversee the work of a wider group that will begin implementing the plan. Information on SEM and the full report have been shared with faculty and staff and also available to the public through the [SEM webpage](#).

Stakeholder Connections

Government Relations—Recognizing TRU’s role in supporting pandemic recovery, the university continues to identify opportunities to engage with government on possible opportunities that will aid students and communities, along with opportunities where there may be linkages between TRU and government priorities. Ministries where we see natural linkages based on new ministry mandate letters include: Health; Labour, Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation; Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport; Citizen Services; Transportation and Infrastructure; and of course, Advanced Education and Skills Training. We recently had the pleasure of meeting with our new Minister of AEST Anne Kang and look forward to discussion with other ministries throughout the next year as circumstances allow.

Limitless Campaign—As TRU looks to wrap up the \$50 million Limitless campaign this spring, donors have continued to show their generosity. A First-Year Student Resiliency Fund has grown to \$53,800 to help first-year students with their tuition needs, while in November, [TRU’s Day of Giving](#) easily surpassed its goal of raising \$36,000 in 36 hours, with 72 donors contributing \$50,390 toward various student bursaries and scholarships. And in December, BMO Financial Group announced a donation of \$750,000, all to benefit Indigenous students. Of the total, \$400,000 is marked for student awards for the [Knowledge Makers](#), an award-winning mentorship program that guides Indigenous researchers starting at the undergraduate level. A second set of awards totaling \$350,000 for the School of Nursing will support Indigenous students across various nursing and health-care assistant programs in Kamloops and Williams Lake.

University Highlights

Universities are places of knowledge creation and transfer and achievement. We have much to celebrate. Below represents a short listing of some of our recent activities and achievements. Much more can be found on [TRU's Newsroom](#).

- Art installation marks TRU's 50th—In December, TRU unveiled a stunning sculpture in commemoration of the university's history. Prominent just inside the university's east entrance, the Wolves sculpture is comprised of three figures, each forged of hundreds of pieces of hand-cut steel, the creation of Armstrong artist Braden Kiefiuk. In Secwépemc oral history, the wolf—'Mélemstye' in local Secwepemctsin dialect—teaches people to hunt and the important qualities a hunter needs to be successful. Such qualities are also similar to those important for a successful student. To find out more, read [Meet the wolves of University Drive](#).
- Open Learning leader wins BC award—TRU's Director of Learning Technology and Innovation Brian Lamb recently received the [BCcampus Award for Excellence in Open Education](#) in recognition of his leadership, commitment and dedication to the area. Lamb, along with other members of the OL team, have been a critical support for TRU during the pandemic and shift to virtual learning.
- Student credits co-op for professional growth—TRU's 2019 Co-op Student of the Year, Brad Crump, is set to graduate this year and credits his co-op experiences for being an integral part of his learning. In this [feature story](#), he encourages students to draw from every experience: "I used to flip lumber eight hours a day, and now I'm using machine learning to help predict forest fires. Don't discount the experiences of any job."

TRU Executive Priorities 2020/21

Context and strategy. Prior to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the executive identified 2020/21 as a year particularly of capacity-building in preparing for future strategic planning and increased organizational resilience. Organizational resilience has become an even more dominant priority due to pressures associated with the pandemic, which introduced new urgent and important goals. Some other priorities have been slowed, scaled back, or delayed in light of COVID-related priorities.

Overarching Priority: Institutional Resilience and Capacity-Building (leadership, culture, stakeholders, planning)

Status	Priority	Activities
*NEW (since March 2020)	Pandemic response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate move to remote work and learning where possible
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Operations Centre
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead development of the Provincial Go Forward Guidelines
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term extreme financial prudence
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International student recruitment, conversion and retention
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate with other institutions directly and through RUCBC committees

*NEW (since March 2020)	Pandemic communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic communications – faculty, staff, students, government
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with regional community and business in relation to pandemic recovery
Partially complete	Senior leadership development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New President’s Leadership Group • New President’s Executive • Integrate new VPUR • Executive and PLG planning sessions
In progress (slowed)	Formalization of an EDI Committee and delivery of specific EDI-related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search to fill EDI position. Waiting for an update from HR on hiring.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference for pan-campus EDI committee development. Dependent on appointment of coordinator
In progress (slowed)	Maintain 3-year financial sustainability plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan is evolving due to the fluid nature of international student recruitment. Will have a 3-year financial sustainability plan complete for final 21/22 budget approval by end of March 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New: focus on aggressive international student recruitment and student success
In progress	Build an engaged workforce and strong culture (leadership development, onboarding, surveys)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRU Leaders training program – successful conclusion and new intake
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRU Emerging Leaders program to launch this winter
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRU’s People Plan is currently under development
In progress	Formalize risk management processes for administration and board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expecting to have a full revised ERM program launched for May A&F meeting.

In progress (Delayed)	Staff and faculty online training modules legislation, governance, and privacy/security issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress interrupted by pandemic
In progress (slowed)	Strengthen institutional communications (internal, reputation, marketing/recruiting, executive, issues, alumni, donors and friends etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional communications framework • Engagement strategies for faculty, staff, students, community • External stakeholder identification and mapping • Marketing/recruiting using data and comparables
In progress	Fundraising — “Limitless” conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign wind-up and communications
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwork for new campaign
Delayed	Systematic government relations plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies, messages, scheduling for contacts with ministries and agencies
In progress (slowed)	Develop new integrated strategic planning and implementation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green paper (“plan for the plan”)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for integrated strategic plan

The Four Strategic Change Goals		
1. Students – Balance and Achievement Gaps		
Status	Priority	Activities
Complete	Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted goals for future composition of student population
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pan-campus input and consultation
2. Truth, Reconciliation, and Rights		
Status	Priority	Activities
In progress (slowed)	New partnership agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renew agreement with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc
In progress	Establish an archeology and heritage preservation policy/process for capital projects on TRU lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archeology contract with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archeology investigation on the 800 University site as first engagement.

3. Research Leadership		
Status	Priority	Activities
In progress	New Strategic Research Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategies and focus for further development of research and scholarship
In progress	New research chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-4 new research chairs, dependent on hiring
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CRCs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Predictive Sciences Chair
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Researcher in Residence with City of Kamloops
4. Lifelong Learning		
Status	Priority	Activities
In progress (slowed)	Open Learning (OL) Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic direction for OL vision

Capital projects		
Status	Priority	Activities
Deferred	Multi-year institutional capital plan (update)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will continue to tweak the existing capital plan
In progress	Execute Year 1 of Digital Strategy (transition to cloud for core systems). Mar. 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute contract with Ellucian
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full migration by September 2021
Complete	Complete Nursing and Population Health building and associated site-works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-time and on-budget
In progress	Daycare Centre/Research Centre and related site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete architectural drawings • Tender for CM services • Begin Construction