Joining forces
Reviewers urge combining SPH, community health unit

The external academic review of the School of Public Health (SPH) is done and the reviewers arrived at one overarching conclusion: although the mission and vision of the School of Public Health are appropriate, the school cannot successfully achieve its mission and vision with current resourcing.

In their written report, the reviewers urged the university to review the current practice of two public health units and "engage in a dialogue about how to integrate Community Health and Epidemiology and the School of Public Health."

Four possible scenarios were offered by the review team to address resourcing concerns: move community health and epidemiology from the College of Medicine into SPH; merge SPH into the existing department; merge both under the Council of Health Science Deans; or invest significant funding in SPH that may result in a "natural and progressive realignment and rapprochement of CHE (community health and epidemiology) with the school, perhaps enabled by hard-money offers of joint appointments or even joint leadership."

In addition to a structural review, the review team also assessed teaching and research activity in the school and noted many accomplishments in its eight-year history, as well as areas for improvement. All recommendations are in a written report recently presented to Interim Provost Ernie Barber.

Faculty members in the school were given an opportunity to respond to the reviewer's report, and they indicated strong preference for integrating community health and epidemiology into the school. The response stated they "believe that amalgamating with other units with similar interests will be instrumental in ensuring that the original vision is fully realized and hopefully exceeded."

"This review is a call to action and in order to take this action, we need a group of leaders to simultaneously review the recommendations and provide an action plan to move forward," said Barber. A task group has been charged by Barber to develop a plan by Oct. 15, 2015.

Teaching and research in public health remains critically important to the university and we need to reach a consensus around the action required to ensure success.

Ernie Barber

Jennifer Robertson is communications officer in Institutional Planning and Assessment.
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**IN THE KITCHEN**

High school students from across the province gathered in the Thorvaldson food lab May 14 for Cooking Up Saskatchewan, a competition to see who could up with the best unique recipe using chicken in an appetizer and a main course. The event, put on by Agriculture in the Classroom, also included a session entitled Exploring Food Science with hands-on activities and experiments for the classmates of the cooks.

**THANK YOU**

to those who attended the Women in Technology: Trends, Opportunities, and Strategies for Success presentation by Dr. Kelly Lyons from the Faculty of Information, University of Toronto held on March 5, 2015.

The Department of Computer Science gratefully acknowledges the financial support for this event from the President’s Diversity Enhancement Fund and the Office of the Dean of Arts and Science through the Role Model Speaker Fund.

**NEXT DEADLINE**

Thursday, August 20, 2015

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GOING FISHING

Dear Readers,

This issue of On Campus News marks the end of our 22nd year of publishing, and the end of my tenure as editor. After more than 14 years with this paper, I have decided it’s time to move on, to explore other opportunities out there in the wide world. So, on July 31st the shingle on my door will read, gone fishing.

To say it has been a privilege does not begin to cover it. I have met extraordinary people and seen extraordinary things but the best part is I have had the chance to write about them all. The goal is to limit the number of times students have to come back and stand in line.

The test of the changes and offerings will come in the fall, he said, “but I’m confident that with better access to our products here and online, and with a more welcoming environment we’ll see an improvement in the student experience.”

Patrick Hayes, University Library, University Archives and Special Collections

On May 9, 1958, the University of Saskatchewan awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law honoris causa to the Right Honorable John G. Diefenbaker, front right. In 1957, Diefenbaker led the Tories to their first electoral victory in 27 years and would serve as Canada’s 13th Prime Minister for the following six years.

Diefenbaker earned three degrees from the University of Saskatchewan – BA 1915, MA 1916 and LLB 1919. He served as Chancellor from 1969-1979 and is buried on campus. Four other people received honorary degrees that day: Wilbur Roy Jackett, Q.C., B.A., M.A., LL.B., B.C.L (Discipline / contribution: public service ; jurisprudence); Cornelius Packard Rhoads, A.B., M.D., D.Sc. (Discipline / contribution: medicine – oncology); Henry George /T_h_ode, M.B.E., M.Sc., Ph.D., D.Sc., F.R.S.C. (Discipline / contribution: spectroscopy); and Nancy Adams (Discipline / contribution: community service).
Options needed to avoid climate disaster

Steve Lawrence and David Geary each appear to make some apparently compelling arguments against nuclear power development, but when presented together their letters inadver- tently demonstrate that we can no longer afford to be dogmatic about power generation.

Lawrence understands that we have to stop using fossil fuels to “avert catastrophic climate change.” I agree with him. But Geary bases his case against investment in Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) on “plentiful low cost natural gas,” a fossil fuel that contributes to that catastrophe. Coal, like gas, is plentiful and cheaper than nuclear, which is why it is the technology of choice for developing countries (India is planning to build 500 new plants) but this is not mentioned because people already understand the problems with coal. Far from “having respect for future generations,” anti-nuclear dogma may leave our children with a destabilized climate, vast tracts of productive land lost to the sea, and oceans so acidic that shellfish cannot make shells. No form of power genera- tion is without some problems so we must take a rational look at all the pros and cons if we are to select our best options. Lawrence actually admits that he has not bothered to consider the harm windmills must do. If he had he would have found that it is not working, and that causes windmill fatalities but fires, falls, rotating equipment and the occasional collapse. Scientif- ic studies show that in routine operation they kill thousands of birds and bats, some of which are endangered.

Just a little bit of research would have also revealed that wind power relies on neodymium magnets. Mining and production of neodymium in China has been featured in reports by the Green Guardian, BBC and PBS because of the extreme environmental damage it has caused. There is no disposal plan for these wastes and so windmills must, in Lawrence’s own words, be “morally wrong.” Solar has similar problems and presumably joins wind, nuclear, coal and gas in their moral wrongness. This black and white logic leaves us no accept- able future.

I applaud the development by Tesla of a battery for residen- tial energy storage, but the “2 cents/kwh” Lawrence quotes is for the battery, a storage device, not the cost of power genera- tion. The UK is investigating the 16 cents/kwh nuclear option because it has maxed out its cost-effective renewables and has no other options. Germany, in shuttering its nuclear fleet, has not really gone green because they rely extensively on coal and gas to supplement their intermittent renewables. The doubling of Germany’s electricity price suggests that renewables may not actually be as cheap as Lawrence suggests. For every “SMRs will not be commercially successful” article that Geary quotes there is another that says they will. Geary might be right. Then again he might be wrong. China, Russia, France, the USA and many other countries all believe the experts Geary quoted are wrong. R&D is the way to find out and the economic reward if successful is enormous.

The fact is greenhouse gases are a huge problem and we need options if we are to avoid climate disaster. Improving the efficiency of power use, storage and distri- bution is important. Improving all our generation technologies so they are safer, cheaper, more deployable and have a minimum environmental impact is key. But we must take our blinders off and recognize the reality of our situation if we are to create a sustainable world. Power gener- ation is not an issue on which we can afford to be driven by closed-mindedness. Instead we need to consider all the options and then make choices through evidence-based discussion.

Neil Alexander Executive Director Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation
Inside Aboriginal gangs
Research may improve success of intervention

They spotted him while he was out with his wife at a Regina mall. Five men from a rival gang started making trouble, chasing him outside and down a back alley. Steps ahead of his pursuers, he ducked into a car.

“So what did he do?” asked Robert (Bobby) Henry in discussing his research into men in Saskatchewan’s Aboriginal gangs. “I know what I would do, I’d be in the vehicle and I’d be gone,” Henry said. “They had knives, there’s five of them—I’m outta there. Not him. His reputation was on the line.”

Henry’s story continued: the pursued man grabbed a knife from the car, tied a leather jacket around his arm and turned to meet his pursuers. When it was over, the five attackers were on the ground and he, despite two stab wounds, was still standing, as was his reputation as one of the toughest knife fighters in the city.

Henry spent the past four and half years as a PhD candidate in the Department of Native Studies gaining insights about men in Aboriginal gangs— their culture, their behaviour, how they came to be in gangs, and how they got out. He hopes the knowledge can inform interventions to help Aboriginal youth leave gang life, or avoid it altogether.

Henry worked closely with STR8-UP, a Saskatoon organization created to support those looking to exit the gang lifestyle. Although Henry is Métis, from Prince Albert, he said his was a middle-class upbringing and it took time to prove himself both to STR8-UP and to the men associated with it. At first, no one would open up to him, having had experience with researchers in the past who would ask their questions, poke into their lives, and vanish.

So Henry took a different approach, adopting a photo voice research method: the men would be given cameras and asked to capture images that mattered to them, images that said something about their lives. The photos, and the stories that went with them, would then go into a high-quality, printed book.

The proposal intrigued his prospective research subjects; it would make their stories real, something they could own and share. Still, they were suspicious, explained Henry. “They asked me, ‘so what are you getting out of all this?’ I told them, ‘I get to listen to your stories which will help me to get my PhD!’” Henry successfully defended his PhD earlier this year.

Now gathered into a book titled Brighter Days Ahead, the images and stories he collected offer a glimpse of a world rarely seen or understood by outsiders. It is a place of hypermasculinity, Henry said, of unrelenting violence, harsh codes of behaviour and punishment, but also of honour. Men spoke of the psychological toll of never showing weakness, of putting on the face to look dangerous, he continued.

Henry shared the words of a former gang member: “You hear the brothers at night, some of them, you hear them crying in the cells, and when you do, you hear a lot of people saying, ‘Who’s that crying? Who’s that little girl?’ You know, that crying stops. That’s what I mean by putting on the mask to wear, to belong, to be accepted.”

Gang life starts early, Henry explained. Former members spoke to him of abusive home lives and indoctrination into violence from the time they entered school; one took a photo of his former schoolyard to illustrate.

“Here’s where a lot of this started for (gang members),” Henry said. “Not at eight, nine, 10, 11, 12, but at four and five where they were learning how to fight on the school ground because they were getting bullied. So they started to fight back, and that’s how they started to build their reputation.”

Success is possible in the gangs, he said, but it is success with limits unfamiliar to most people. A gang member might have tens of thousands of dollars from the drug trade or other criminal activity, but no easy way to spend it. One does not walk onto a car lot with $50,000 in cash to buy a brand new vehicle but “you’ll see these guys driving a cheap older car that they bought with cash, then they trick it out with thousands of dollars of accessories.”

In some ways, men behave with honour and responsibility that would not be unfamiliar in broader society. Henry recounted how one gang member created his own $300,000 insurance policy for his wife and child. Facing a jail term of several years, he directed his wife to caches of money in locations around the city, all of it set aside to tide over the family while he was incarcerated.

The impulse to act honourably or take responsibility, said Henry, shows one possible road out of gangs. It shows the desire to be thought of as a man, one worthy of respect.

“Prevention and intervention programs must focus on masculinity as a causal factor,” Henry concluded. “We have to understand masculinity is one of the main things motivating them. The performance that (gang members) are doing, it’s a specialized, localized performance but it’s something that we need to redevelop for community, or that communities must develop for themselves.”

The impulse to act honourably or take responsibility, shows one possible road out of gangs. It shows the desire to be thought of as a man, one worthy of respect.
REDUCING WASTE
at the U of S

It’s that time again! Outdoor events season is upon us at the university, and the Office of Sustainability is here to help keep our environmental footprint at a minimum. Keep an eye out for our waste stations at the upcoming Graduation Pownwoow and Employee Appreciation Picnic. The Office of Sustainability is always looking to help reduce waste at the university, so contact us today about how to keep your event clean and waste free!

Visit sustainability.usask.ca for more information.

Filling the gaps for international health providers

LESLEY PORTER

For health care providers, many of whom spend their days talking with patients, being a good communicator is absolutely crucial. It is such a valuable skill that the Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (CIHC), a national body promoting interdisciplinary education and collaboration in health care, declared it one of six core competencies in its framework for successful interprofessional practice. Other competencies include patient-centered care, role clarification, team functioning, collaborative leadership and conflict resolution.

For Liz Harrison, that framework will be a guide for new research that will focus on building those competencies and filling any knowledge gaps in internationally educated health professionals looking to practice in Canada.

“What we’ve identified is that there is a gap, potentially in some, not all, individuals who come from other countries,” said Harrison, professor and associate dean in the U of S School of Physical Therapy, and a member of the Western Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (WCIHC), the group leading the research.

“The nature of this grant, supported through the British Columbia Ministry of Health and the Western and Northern Health Human Resource Forum, includes working with key stakeholders in the western provinces to develop educational resources to fill in that gap.”

The first part of the project will involve an environmental scan to determine what educational resources and programs—often called bridging programs,” she said—currently exist for internationally educated health-care professionals. Such programs their knowledge and skills to prepare them to work effectively in the Canadian health-care system.

Harrison noted that competencies in areas like team communication, culture and conflict management have been identified as potential problem areas.

“For those of us who are coming into Canada. They can very well identify what some of the gaps are so that we can develop resources that maximize their effectiveness as members of healthcare teams for the Canadian context.”

McEown community garden expanded, funded

Spring has arrived and gardeners have started to ready their tools for a summer’s worth of hard work. For some University of Saskatchewan students staying in residence over the summer, the benefits of that work is fresh produce.

The McEown community garden is the latest addition to the university’s sustainability efforts on campus, explained Matt Wolsfeld, community engagement co-ordinator in the Office of Sustainability. The nearly 700 sq m garden space located next to the McEown Park residences is a joint effort between the Office of Sustainability and Consumer Services, and offers student residents their own garden plots. Wolsfeld said the garden operated informally in previous years but received $13,500 in university and corporate funding that included enough to hire a community garden co-ordinator in the sustainability office.

Gardens can play an important role in communities like the U of S, said Wolsfeld. “For residents of McEown Park, the gardens represent an opportunity to provide food for themselves or their families while expressing their own cultural traditions in an accepting community atmosphere.”

Ranjani Datta, co-ordinator of the McEown Park Community Garden Board, said this happens on a regular basis. “The garden brings all of us (from) 20 countries and cultures together. It builds responsibilities, provides an integrated learning space for us and our children, and provides us the power to choose what type of food we need and share.”

The university funding, along with sponsorship by PotashCorp, has meant the garden could be doubled in size and that tools, a shed and signage could be purchased. According to Genesis Hivia Orio, a regional and urban planning student who is working in the new position of garden co-ordinator, the resources committed to the project “from both on and off campus will result in endless fruitful outcomes.”

Wolsfeld said there is a strong interest in community gardens and local food security, and the Office of Sustainability hopes to see more garden development across campus for students, staff and faculty.

Visit sustainability.usask.ca for more information. 

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May 22, 2015 —ON

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The word convocation arises from the Latin vocare meaning to call. The convocation ceremony is a calling together of new graduates.

The University of Saskatchewan’s Spring Convocation will take place June 1-4. In addition to awarding thousands of degrees to students, a number of honorary degrees and awards will be presented to deserving individuals.

JAY WILSON
Master Teacher Award
Jay Wilson, department head of curriculum studies, is a leader and scholar, but above all else, he is a teacher. Students recognize that as they line up to get into his classes. He is innovative by nature and regularly invents fresh ways to do things and carries them out fearlessly. As a teacher-scholar, he has developed a nationally recognized program of research in authentic learning. But it is his investment in students—who have described him as inspiring and transformational, a teacher who will influence them for a lifetime—that sets the teaching standard on our campus.

RAE BOURNER
President’s Service Award
Rae Bournер joined the university in 1976 as a secretary in the College of Dentistry moving into the role of manager of the undergraduate education program in the College of Medicine. Throughout her career she has displayed remarkable skill, tenacity and good humour that have not gone unnoticed by supervisors, colleagues and students. But it is her care and concern for students that generates the most admiration. By the most conservative estimate, Rae has been involved in the lives of more than 2,000 students and residents and is described as a true “mom” to all.

BRETT WILSON
Honorary Doctor of Laws
Brett Wilson, a U of S grad, has had a long and varied career as a member of Canada’s Foreign Service, serving around the world from Beijing and Bogotá, to Geneva and New York City. His roles have included work with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and the Privy Council Office as senior adviser, Social Policy Development Secretariat. Chasis received a Fulbright scholarship to attend Harvard University in 2006-2007.

DEBORAH CHATTSIS
Honorary Doctor of Laws
Deborah Chatissi, a member of the Atikahnakoop First Nation and a U of S grad, has had a long and varied career as a member of Canada’s Foreign Service, serving around the world from Beijing and Bogotá, to Geneva and New York City. Her roles have included work with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and the Privy Council Office as senior adviser, Social Policy Development Secretariat. Chasis received a Fulbright scholarship to attend Harvard University in 2006-2007.

CARL ZYLAK
Honorary Doctor of Science
Carl Zylak earned his BA and MD degrees from the University of Saskatchewan. Following 10 years practicing radiology in Winnipeg, he accepted the position of professor and chairman of the Department of Radiology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. He was the founding director of the Ontario Breast Screening Program, and worked in Ohio, Michigan and Arizona. He has over 200 published articles, book chapters, scientific presentations and lectures to his credit. He and his wife, Edith Ann, have four children and ten grandchildren.

SARA WILLIAMS
Honorary Doctor of Laws
Sara Williams became an extension specialist in horticulture at the University of Saskatchewan in 1972 and initiated programs for both home gardeners and the horticulture industry throughout Saskatchewan. Williams is the author and co-author of numerous books. In the decade following her retirement, she has raised funds for a hostel and garden for 80 girls attending secondary school Tanzania. These students are mostly from impoverished families in remote villages. The hostel provides a safe and supportive environment for their years of study and has become a model for other communities in Tanzania.

KAILASH PRASAD
Earned Doctor of Science
Kailash Prasad’s research focuses on oxidative stress and how reactive oxygen species play a role in everything from heart failure to diabetes. His discoveries have led to eight patents and one copyright. He has published 239 refereed papers and 35 invited reviews and book chapters. Prasad has received numerous honours including the Life-time Research Achievement Award from the University of Manitoba, the Centennial Medal from the Government of Saskatchewan, the Innovation Award from the University of Saskatchewan and Innovation Place, and the Research Achievement Award and Distinguished Service Award from the International College of Angiology.

V. MOHAN MALHOTRA
Honorary Doctor of Science
V. Mohan Malhotra is well known for his contributions in the field of concrete technology. He has contributed to using industrial waste in the concrete industry, which has attracted global interest because of economic, energy and sustainability implications. He has published more than 100 papers in refereed journals and has authored or co-authored six books. He is member or fellow in numerous organizations including the American Concrete Institute and the Engineering Institute of Canada. He received the Government of Canada Commemoration Medal for the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada.

ADAM BAXTER-JONES
Distinguished Researcher Award
One of the world’s foremost experts in pediatric exercise science, Adam Baxter-Jones, professor in the College of Kinesiology and interim dean for the College of Graduate Studies and Research, is renowned for his international collaborations and approaches to longitudinal research of children’s growth and development. His studies and leadership in this area have altered how the medical and other health professionals view the role that exercise has on childhood growth and maturation. In 2012, he received the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation’s Achieve-ment Award, the highest honour for lifetime achievement bestowed by this organization.

BRUCE SCHNELL
Honorary Doctor of Science
Bruce Schnell has many connections to the U of S, from receiving his pharmacy degree in 1969 to eventually becoming dean of the College of Pharmacy and vice-president academic. Schnell directed two national research projects that influenced hospital pharmacy standards and practice in Canada and abroad. He has served many pharmacy organizations locally, provincially and nationally, including the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada, the Association of Deans of Pharmacy of Canada, and the Canadian Foundation for Pharmacy. The Schnell family connection to the U of S is strong: 31 members have received 34 degrees.
When Matthew Dalzell yells “all hands on deck,” he means it. Literally.

After 23 years of service and training, Dalzell will soon assume the post of commanding officer (CO) of HMCS Unicorn, Saskatoon’s reserve division of the Royal Canadian Navy. His “ship” is pretty much land locked—a stone frigate tied up across from City Hall on the corner of 24th Street and Fourth Avenue—but it, like its incoming CO, has a long and proud naval history. 

Dalzell, who by day is the communications officer at the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation, is a third-generation prairie sailor; his father was Unicorn’s 17th CO (Dalzell with his MSc). His maternal grandfather was a sea cadet officer during the Second World War. “It just seemed that’s what I would do.”

He joined up as an officer cadet in 1992, during his first year at the U of S. Not only was he following a family tradition but my parents pointed out the navy would help me earn money for my parents. “That was a big question to the navy for people from the prairies? “That’s a big question asked and there are so many apocryphal answers to it,” replied Dalzell. First, it is a different experience, he said, but “prairie people are used to hard work and staring out at big empty horizons. The final reason we make good sailors, I think, is because we don’t necessarily know what we’re getting into.”

What Dalzell will take command of in August is a reserve unit of about 60 sailors that carried the battle honours of all the ships named Unicorn that have gone before, from the one that sailed against the British armada in 1588 to the light aircraft carrier that supported the British Pacific Fleet operations at Okinawa in 1945. “And I’m the captain,” he said, adding his role as CO is “akin to being a school principal in many ways.”

The four main roles of HMCS Unicorn are to recruit and train sailors for the regular reserve navy; to be available to augment the fleet; to “connect with Canadians, including answering the question of why there is a naval reserve in Saskatoon,” and to respond to domestic emergencies, particularly floods. “We have boats and we know how to use them.”

Dalzell, who carries the rank of lieutenant commander, described himself as “a sea-going fighting logistics officer.”

At the same time, Dalzell was pursuing a civilian career. In an interview in his office with a Geiger counter ticking away in the background—I leave it on for guests, and the audios. The one thing I am trying to prove is that radiation is everywhere and that it should be respected but not feared, like a bear, or fire.”—he recounted his time teaching in Mayfair, Sask. “Where I was working in the high school science and English departments.” Back in Saskatoon, Dalzell started his master’s degree and worked as a substitute teacher for Saskatoon Public Schools.

That was followed by three years with Unicorn as its full-time training officer. Then, a volunteer opportunity with the Canada-Wide Science Fair organization gave him his first taste of communications work where “my science, English and teaching background helped me explain what was going on.” He joined the Canadian Light Source as its communications officer before the facility even opened, “and at that point, science communications became my thing.” In 2012, he moved to the Fedoruk Centre.

So what is the attraction to the navy for people from the prairies? “That’s a big question everybody asks and there are so many apocryphal answers to it,” replied Dalzell. First, it is a different experience, but “prairie people are used to hard work and staring out at big empty horizons. The final reason we make good sailors, I think, is because we don’t necessarily know what we’re getting into.”

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Dalzell, who carries the rank of lieutenant commander, will be the Unicorn’s CO for three years, and admitted, “there’s something special about being a ship’s captain. It will certainly be a highlight of my career.” At the end of his term, there may be regional and national job opportunities for former captains “but ultimately, what happens to me is up to the navy based on the job I do.”

The naval reserves have given Dalzell myriad opportunities to travel, train and acquire leadership skills but the real appeal for this prairie sailor is closely linked with his patriotism. “For me, it’s about the idea of service, of contributing to an institution, and contributing to and serving one’s country.”

Matthew Dalzell

Matthew Dalzell aboard one of the Unicorn’s 24-foot rigid inflatable boats during a training exercise on Blackstrap Lake.
Creating a second home to welcome all students

Devin Clemens, student assistant in ISSAC.

He stepped off a plane in Japan for a study abroad experience; he found himself in a strange place, not speaking a word of the language. What Devin Clemens also found was a place where everyone helped him find his way, every step of the way, even strangers.

“I found so much support and I wanted to take that philosophy here,” said Clemens, a student assistant in the International Students and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC). “We are trying to create a space where international students feel they are welcome.”

So when Clemens started at ISSAC in the summer of 2014, he set out to create the Global Connections Student Lounge within ISSAC’s space in lower Place Riel as comfortable, helpful and safe as possible.

“Orientation and providing the supports to help international students get settled is one part of this,” explained Clemens who is pursuing a master’s degree in political science. “The other part is creating a space on campus that can be a second home. Many students are away from home and need a place that is welcoming, a place where they can study or meet their friends.”

To that end, Clemens and ISSAC staff made some changes. They reconfigured furniture to create a lounge with seating for about 70, they relocated a meeting room to create a second kitchen, they set aside playing cards and board games, and they also developed multiple resource centres that include magazines, journals, campus publications, and tourism and information guides for the City of Saskatoon.

They have also been profiling specialized events around international occasions, such as Chinese New Year or Holi, and this has brought a number of students to ISSAC. But few events have been more successful than international soccer matches played on a large screen TV every week.

“We’ve had a TV here for a while, but we recently started to show champions league football matches and that brings in a lot of people to watch,” Clemens said, adding that in the long term they hope to host more culturally specific events and have video game consoles so students can have game nights.

The space, however, is not exclusively for international students. In fact, Clemens said a lot of other students spend time in the centre as well. “Many come here because they are curious about going abroad and are able to meet students from those countries and get a feel for the culture.”

That mix of domestic and international students is key for Clemens. “Part of our core mandate is interculturalization and creating a space that is welcoming and safe for all students. When this room is filled with a mosaic of domestic and international students co-existing with each other academically and socially, I know we have succeeded.”
Upgrades to restore aquatic research facility

To casual passersby, the fabric-covered building that is the R.J.F. Smith Centre for Aquatic Ecology at the U of S will not change much in appearance, but its function will be greatly enhanced by $800,000 in upgrades.

The first thing a visitor sees when entering the building, located near the Western College of Veterinary Medicine and named for a biology professor, is two ranks of large plastic tanks. Typically used to store and handle water for agricultural purposes, the tanks have been adapted for aquatic experiments, and their supervisors.

Unfortunately, researchers had to scale down the scope of experiments since the space is very limited in terms of what we can do there,” he said. “These students are waiting for R.J.F. to be renovated and up and running again to focus on the full scope of their projects.”

But Niyogi’s dual appointment with the Toxicology Centre has minimized effects on his own work.

“I have access to other facilities, but there has been very direct impacts on research of Doug (Chivers) and Maffur (as this facility) is essential for both of their research programs,” he said. These have included delays in recruiting graduate students and a drain on research funds to pay for these facilities.

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Research opportunities open up for AgBio undergrads

BRITTANY STEVENS

The College of Agriculture and Bioresources is opening doors for its undergraduate students to pursue unique and exciting research opportunities.

One is the First Year Research Experience (FYRE) program designed to help students find answers to questions using advanced research methods. According to one professor, the initiative encourages students to think outside the box, and shift their way of thinking from what they have known in the past.

“The FYRE program is instrumental in determining a student’s choice and students’ choice based on a combination of creativity, clarity and visual appeal. ‘FYRE’ encompasses so many valuable skills such as teamwork and collaboration, but also forces students to step back and evaluate their peers to see what worked and what didn’t,” said Kara Loy, co-ordinator of undergraduate research initiative in the Office of the Vice-President Research, which co-directs the program with the vice-provost of teaching and learning’s office.

Kyle Cuthbertson and his group members Andrew Zielinski and Zachary Reddekopp won best poster overall, and were impressed both with the freedom they had with FYRE, as well as the teamwork. “First-year classes can be a little bit generic,” said Zielinski. “It was great to change things up. It was so much easier to engage with material that we were actually interested in.”

The FYRE program is also underway in the Colleges of Kinesiology and Arts and Science, and it is expected to inspire more colleges to adopt first-year research programs.

Upper-year students in agriculture and bioresources are being offered opportunities to broaden their research scope as well. During the summer of 2014, six students took part in a research-based employment program where they worked alongside a faculty member in the college on a specific project.

Shannon Palmer, a former animal bioscience major, worked with Greg Penner in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science examining zoonotic infectious diseases in cattle, an experience she described as intense. “We were looking at the age of weaning dairy calves and how it affects their gut and digestive system,” she said. “I wouldn’t say I had much of a summer holiday, but in hindsight, it was worth it.”

Now in her first year of veterinary medicine, Palmer is grateful to be able to draw on her experiences she prepares for a career in animal healthcare. “I really love what I am doing,” she said. “The experience with undergraduate research gave me independence in my studies, and confirmed that veterinary medicine is what I am supposed to be doing. The results of the research feel like the cherry on top of this whole experience.”

Nicole Marleau and Amanda Schurman agree.

Currently in her first year of graduate studies, Marleau credits her undergraduate research opportunity with helping her determine her future. “The project I worked on was really instrumental in determining my future in grad school, as my thesis will essentially pick up where we left off.”

For Schurman, the experience changed her view of research. “Before this I had little patience for traditional research, but once I was able to experience field work, I was able to look at things from a different perspective.” This new outlook, she said, will help when she starts applying for her first post-graduation job.

“I didn’t think there would be so many options available to undergraduate students,” said Marleau. “My advice to other students is to build relationships with professors. If they know you, they will recommend you for opportunities they feel you will benefit from.”

Brittany Stevens is former communications co-ordinator in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

This is a shortened version of an article that appeared in the March 2015 issue of the college’s Agknowledge magazine.

Building affinity with students and alumni

COLLEEN MACPHERSON

Building affinity with students and alumni of the College of Education to be loud and proud both on campus and off.

The dean of education is leading a number of strategies to boost the level of engagement among students and those who are now teaching in classrooms across Saskatchewan and beyond. Asked about the current level of connection between the college and its graduates, Prytula said her own experience is reflected in today’s reality: “I completed three degrees here and I never really engaged with the college until I started working here.”

Such opportunities on programs has meant “we’ve done little work on engagement and, as a result, many alumni have little interest in giving back or becoming involved,” she said. As for students, “they feel more connected to the school where they interned than to the college where they trained.”

Much of the engagement data came to light in a survey. Prytula said while it required “my rhinoceros skin to read some of the comments,” she understands how a college can appear to undervalue alumni engagement: “teachers go off and teach, and we assume they’ll stay connected. That’s a mistake.”

The first step in building affinity was adding a direct admission option that will allow students to be enrolled in the college of their choice in their four-year program, giving faculty and staff more opportunity to get to know them. “That,” said the dean, “is huge.”

There are also efforts underway to shift the culture within the college in a way that “allows us to illustrate to one another how valuable everyone’s work is within the college and beyond,” she said. Prytula said an external consultant has been retained to work on enhancing the college’s identity, “to create constant reminders of who we are that will help students develop affinity and pride.”

One such reminder could be a celebration of the transition from education student to internng teacher. “Why aren’t we making that more significant?” Prytula expressed it to white coat ceremonies in health care colleges, and recalled her own move from the college to the classroom: “I remember having

Prytula

to overwhelm myself because everything else was overwhelming. It’s an exciting and meaningful time, and we need to do a better job of honouring that.”

There are also plans to celebrate significant milestones and accomplished graduates from the college’s 87-year history. Other ideas include an education alumni tent at the Oct. 23 Huskies football game, a banner going up on the river-facing side of the building, and the creation of alumni association chapters in Saskatoon and Calgary.

Prytula acknowledged building engagement internally and externally is a process of continuous improvement but what she wants to see are students and alumni who “say awesome things about the college. We want to see applicants going up, our graduates coming back for events, and maybe even donations going up when they see we’re listening. It might happen a year from now, or two years from now but when it does, we’ll have a very different story to tell.”

ON CAMPUS NEWS  May 22, 2015

11
Archives in the news

One regular and long-time user of the University Library, University Archives and Special Collections has been Colleen MacPherson, outgoing editor of On Campus News. It is not infrequent for the phone to ring early in the morning and for it to be MacPherson seeking some obscure piece of information, or a long-forgotten photograph, or confirmation of a fact related to the University of Saskatchewan.

And it has been a two-way relationship. From the start of her tenure as editor, MacPherson has recognized the value of University Archives, and promoted it to the wider community. There was a great deal of collaboration with On Campus News during the university’s centennial year, including the addition of a regular feature in the paper entitled 100 Years of Photos From the Archives. After the centennial, MacPherson continued to make room on Page 3 for From the Archives, featuring photos and stories from the past.

As the university’s newspaper of record, On Campus News is a very useful asset in University Archives, as is its collection of photos that stretches back the start of publication in 1993. MacPherson talked about this recently: “Each year when we’re done publishing, I get two sets of newspapers bound—one for my office and the other for the archives. Even after all of this time, I never fail to feel quite proud when I climb the stairs to the third floor in the Library, wander into the hushed archives offices and hand over a green-bound year of OCNs, just a small annual contribution to University of Saskatchewan history.”