

Signature Area Advisory Circle

Final Report

July 30, 2021

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we walk on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis people. We pay our respects to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this land. The Advisory Circle wrote this report with the intention to strengthen trust and respect with our Indigenous colleagues caring for and affirming our relationships with each other.

Introduction

In May 2021, the Vice President Research (VPR) undertook a process to engage and hear different perspectives held within the University of Saskatchewan (USask) community about the institution's signature areas of research which have been in existence for a decade. Nine online open sessions were held, with attendance of over 500 community members (faculty, staff, and students). The VPR then sought volunteers from those who attended the sessions to reflect on the themes that arose and make recommendations for the future operationalization of the signature areas. Forty volunteers offered their time and expertise, of which ten were selected to form an Advisory Circle.*

The Advisory Circle met seven times throughout June and July 2021 and:

- Reviewed the raw notes and survey results from the nine engagement sessions, as well as a thematic analysis conducted by the Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research (CHASR);
- Conducted an environmental scan of U15 Canadian Universities and their practices around signature areas;
- Reviewed USask's historical documents related to signature areas;
- Analyzed and discussed the feedback and information.

The Signature Area Advisory Circle was tasked with producing a written report to include the following sections (as per the terms of reference, attached):

- An institutional definition on signature areas;
- An institutional statement of purpose for signature areas;
- A current assessment of signature areas based on findings from stakeholder engagements in May 2021;
- Articulation of criteria for establishing, renewing, or disestablishing signature areas;
- Identification of critical actions and factors needed to ensure long-term success of signature areas;
- Alignment of the report with stakeholder findings;
- Other recommendations and analysis.

These elements represent the "what," "why," and "how" of USask's signature areas of research.

It has been a privilege to come together and consider the thoughts of the 500 people who engaged in this important process. The definition, statement of purpose, current state assessment, criteria, and identification of actions for success come from consideration of the past, the present climate, and the future potential for signature areas at the university. In the past signature areas represented a lost opportunity, despite what was achieved in terms of improving the university's ranking, success with funding, attracting "talent," and creating "an authentic narrative that helped develop a more clearly defined brand identity" (Reflecting on our Signature Areas of Research, January 2021, <https://research.usask.ca/documents/research-excellence/signature-areas-of-research-report-21-jan-2021-final.pdf>).

Yet there is much to be learned from the past signature areas to better understand going ahead. The opinions captured by the notes from the engagement areas and the CHASR report capture inward-looking concerns that nevertheless are integrally related to connection to the outside, or to rephrase the current motto, “the university the world needs,” begins with being what the university community needs. A first step is the “bottom up” initiative of the engagement sessions in May, which point to a critical change in how signature areas might be conceived to meet these lofty goals and forms, along with a consideration of how other U15 universities define signature areas, as the evidence for our work.

Signature areas need to be inclusive of the many research cultures that define USask and offer increased opportunities for a broader range of research, scholarly, and artistic work. Interdisciplinarity is a core value and not a mere notion of “value added.” It is essential that the members of the university community feel connected to and value the research happening at our university. Inclusion within might lead to a wider notion of inclusion in which researchers consider what they are working for. Research is not meant to be for one group of people but should teach others within and beyond our walls and empower communities and make us recognize what we leave through our research as a legacy.

Leadership in each signature area, regular evaluation, and a broad approach to securing funding, along with clear guidelines for the criteria for a signature area, its care and maintenance, as well as its renew and disestablishment are necessary for success. Regular communication and a recognition of an interweave of established, emerging, and subgroups will grow and sustain our research community.

Research that draws upon Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing should have a place in every signature area rather than contained in its own area. We must acknowledge that the word “discovery” from an Indigenous perspective can carry connotations of colonization and violence which contrasts with our pursuits of gathering and sharing knowledge. An interrogation of the language of the signature area—be it a pursuit of knowledge, innovation, creation, or discovery bespeaks the passion that inspires and informs why we do research.

This is the vision that has inspired our work with the hope that this document will inform and guide the process of the creation of new signature areas.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Jaime and Julia Montgomery (co-chairs, Signature Areas Advisory Circle)

***Advisory Circle members:** Trever Crowe, Lisa Vargo, Tracie Risling, Deborah Anderson, Kerry McPhedran, Vince Bruni-Bossio, Kavitha Ramachandran, Kristine Dreaver-Charles, Angela Jaime, Julia Montgomery, with support from Christopher Martin and Tonya Wirchenko

Institutional definition/framework (what)

Current USask signature areas of research definition

“Areas of research and scholarship that bring the University of Saskatchewan distinct recognition and help to position USask among the most distinguished universities in Canada and among the very best in the world.”

(<https://research.usask.ca/research-excellence/signature-research-areas.php>)

Proposed revision to the definition

Signature areas will grow and sustain established and emerging areas of research and scholarship, inspiring collaborative and inclusive approaches to foster creativity and gain new knowledge and understanding across disciplines.

Institutional statement of purpose (why)

The statement of purpose should align with the university identity, its priorities and strategic research plan.

Proposed statement of purpose

The University of Saskatchewan’s signature areas of research provide distinctive research themes that are relevant and important to our students, local communities, Canadians, and the world. Its framework follows the goals and principles of the university’s strategic research plan and is committed to fostering research impacts and passion with a spirit of optimism, curiosity, inclusivity, community engagement, and multiple ways of knowing to gain national and international prominence.

Current state assessment based on findings from May 2021 USask stakeholder engagements

Summary of the review by the Advisory Circle

i. Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in its signature areas?

- The general consensus is a balance between critique and optimism about signature areas.
- A major issue is in how we are meant to define pre-eminence and create metrics to measure effectiveness (locally? globally?). This was not defined, so many found it difficult to assess without having a proper definition.
- Does the focus on pre-eminence do a disservice to the core themes of signature areas?

Definitions of pre-eminence and success were felt to be unclear and/or inconsistent. The question about whether the university has achieved pre-eminence was a bit of a distraction or deviation from the conversation about whether the signature areas are appropriate.

The university has not set metrics that will be used to track progress or set targets/expectations. It is difficult, then, to assess whether success has been achieved. There is uncertainty on how to quantify and track progress and success. This should be updated as part of the current process.

ii. How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support signature areas? What would it take to bring it to the “next level”?

- There is an absence of leaders whose main role would be to coordinate, facilitate, and support research and strategic initiatives within and between signature areas: enhancing communication and outreach, facilitating collaboration, strategic fundraising or investment planning, and building expertise and succession planning. This lack of leadership is holding back the signature areas from achieving their full potential and needs to be addressed for future viability of these signature areas.
- There is very little, if any, targeted investment in the signature areas. Signature areas are mostly meaningless if they are not used in subsequent analyses or singled out for support.

iii. What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan signature areas?

- Renewal is needed for the existing signature areas and should follow a regular renewal cycle. There was support for regular review and re-alignment of the signature areas.
- Input and bottom-up approach. A bottom-up approach is needed, because a signature area requires active researchers working in that area, and participants made the point that emerging areas likely will not succeed without targeted investment.
- Language and labels that are inclusive to the broader campus community and offer a clear scope, goals, and vision to plan actionable goals are required. The current structure of signature areas does not encourage collaborations between researchers working in

separate signature areas. The term “silo” is used to describe barriers to collaboration and a lack of knowledge about research, scholarly, and artistic work (RSAW) across campus. The implementation of the signature areas is an opportunity to encourage the development of interdisciplinary research clusters by providing targeted funding and support for those clusters that are formed around the signature areas.

- Signature areas should link with areas/disciplines as well as align with government initiatives.
- New signature areas must be relevant to the emerging research landscape and to Saskatchewan’s strengths (this is outside of the mandate of the Advisory Circle; see CHASR report in Appendix).

There were two basic questions (converted to assessments of the current state):

- People do not understand or are unaware of the basis for the signature areas. People are unsure whether the signature areas are based on existing or past strengths or whether they represent areas in which USask aspires to be the “best.”
- People are unsure about whether the signature areas were selected for use by the institution or whether they were meant for external promotion.

How feedback received from stakeholder engagement aligns with intent

The definition and intent that shape this report have been created after careful review of the feedback received about signature areas. While not ignoring their past history, new perspectives and processes arising from the bottom-up approach represented by the open sessions, careful consideration of the feedback by an advisory circle of individuals from different disciplines working collectively and harmoniously, and the proposed pitch sessions speak to a visionary spirit. This intent respects the university’s strategic research plan while being responsive to the input of the university community with the following shared values. It aspires to create research questions and themes that are inclusive of many areas on campus and that look to how different disciplines and ways of knowing might promote collaboration and forms of interdisciplinarity that are yet to be imagined. Community engagement should inform the purpose of each area. Indigenous approaches to knowledge are important to the people of Saskatchewan and are central to what is distinctive about the university’s research landscape and what it can offer in solving problems of importance to Canada and the world. Indigenous approaches are meant to be present in as many of these themes as is possible and join with a sense of encouraging connections between themes. A spirit of inclusion recognizes that signature areas should welcome established and emerging areas of research as well as subthemes. Signature areas will be sustained and grown through a mixture of funding and through leadership in each area that will enable communication of results, evaluation of goals, and a sense that growth can be cyclical and not only linear in its conception. The intent of the signature areas at USask is built upon the recognition that knowledge arises from curiosity and creativity, inspiration and optimism, and that the hours of labour that are devoted to research, artistic, and scholarly work are joined with love and enthusiasm on the part of creators and researchers.

Criteria for establishing, renewing, disestablishing signature areas and critical actions and factors needed to ensure long-term success of signature areas (how)

Guiding Principles Establishing, Renewing, and Disestablishing Signature Areas

- Inclusiveness – signature areas should incorporate diverse expertise, perspectives, and approaches necessary to tackle big complex problems.
- Build on strengths – leverage what we are good at and build teams that synergize to be more than the sum of their parts.
- Engagement – across campus, our community, nationally, and internationally.
- Reconciliation- focusing on acknowledging our past and working to build good relationships through our research.
- Communication and transparency – sharing of goals, publicize opportunities to contribute, open calls to participate in events.
- Milestones and impacts – progress towards stated goals should be measurable, have impact and be publicized, true knowledge translation.
- Sustainability plan – to ensure USask is not the sole funder on an ongoing basis, a plan for transition to outside support is needed.

Criteria and Process for Establishing a Signature Area

Definition of Criteria: Components on which proposed signature areas will be assessed (criteria that are not relevant should be explained).

A Signature Area must demonstrate one or more of the following outcomes:

- Identify areas of existing and persistent research strength and ongoing need.
- Identify areas of emerging research strength and need.
- identify areas for which the university and others expect USask to be known.

There are two broad intentions for establishing a signature area:

Intention #1: Applicants must demonstrate “why” a signature area would be relevant and important to USask. This includes demonstrating that a signature area will align with our current research strength and needs of stakeholders, contribute to developing research strength in emerging areas, and enhance our national reputation.

Intention #2: Applicants will also demonstrate that a signature area is accessible to multiple disciplines, is inclusive, managed, and resourced appropriately.

Intention #1: Demonstrate “why” a signature area would be relevant and important to USask.

Criteria: The signature area is of significance to USask

i. Metrics for Assessment

- a. The extent to which there is an existing group of researchers: Does a vibrant core of researchers already exist at USask? Does this core extend over multiple colleges/schools?
- b. The trend of annual research funding secured within this research area: Is the funding significant and increasing? Is there support from Tri-Agency sources or other government sources? Are funding sources diverse, including NGOs?
- c. The availability of research infrastructure: Is there dedicated research infrastructure to support research activity in this area? Is the infrastructure sufficient to support a signature area?
- d. Other metrics that evaluate the demand for answers to research questions: Is there a demand? Is the demand growing?

Criteria: The signature area is expected to build on our research strengths and/or enhance an important research area that is emerging at USask?

i. Metrics for Assessment

- a. The extent to which there is an existing group of researchers: Is there a vibrant core of researchers? Are colleges/schools intending to recruit new faculty/researchers within this area? This could include Chair positions or other strong leaders.
- b. The trend of annual research funding secured within this research area: Is the funding significant and increasing? Is there support from Tri-Agency sources or other government sources? Are funding sources diverse, including NGOs?
- c. Is there significant research infrastructure with the opportunity to grow and diversify research facilities?
- d. Other metrics that demonstrate an intention to be responsive to emerging challenges and research questions.

Criteria: The signature area is expected to enhance our national reputation.

i. Metrics for Assessment

- a. The degree to which the proposed signature area is aligned with the university's Plan 2025 (<https://plan.usask.ca/>) (e.g., Indigenization)?
- b. Is there specialized infrastructure here in SK that can propel us to the forefront of a field and provide us with a competitive advantage (e.g., Canadian Light Source, Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation, Vaccine Infectious Disease Organization, Gwenna Moss Teaching and Learning, Historical GSIS Lab, Indigenous Land Management Centre)?
- c. The degree to which the proposed signature area is aligned with and responds to expectations of the provincial government: how the signature area(s) will respond to Saskatchewan Growth Plan.

Intention #2: Demonstrate that the signature area is accessible, inclusive, managed, and resourced appropriately.

Criteria: The signature area will foster equity, diversity, and inclusivity.

i. Metrics for Assessment

- a. Demonstrate a commitment in the signature area to research aligned with the university's strategic plans that advance the objectives of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the school or college and university.

Criteria: The signature area demonstrates our commitment to engage with Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous Knowledge Keepers.

i. Metrics for Assessment

- a. Demonstrate that Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing are foundational in the academy. Demonstrate that research will be of benefit to Indigenous peoples and communities as well as to the university community and beyond.

Criteria: The signature area will foster collaboration and partnerships.

i. Metrics for Assessment

- a. Demonstrate, through the description of possible subthemes within the signature area, that there will be several pathways for multiple disciplines to contribute to the larger, bigger picture signature area.
- b. Through the articulation of subthemes, establish space for researchers in the arts, humanities, and social sciences.
- c. Describe how a team approach will be used to foster atypical collaborations needed to solve the real-world problems, including providing examples and details of which disciplines/groups/researchers will be part of the team and how they will contribute.
- d. Identify the ways in which the signature area upholds reconciliation through the building of good relationships.

Criteria: The signature area establishes space for the endeavours of the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

i. Metric for Assessment

- a. Demonstrate that pathways exist for multiple disciplines to participate and contribute to a signature area.

Criteria: The signature area has planned for adequate leadership and resources.

i. Metrics for Assessment

- a. Demonstrate that the signature area will have appropriate leadership including:
 - Director/Leader: a designated leader is proposed who will enact strong leadership for each signature area.
 - Executive/Management Committee: an executive/advisory committee should be proposed that includes representatives from a number of disciplines in the signature area, as well as the lead for each subtheme.
 - Roles and Responsibility for the Director and Executive/Advisory Committee: develop a reporting plan, governance model, build program, build expertise, events, and succession planning.
- b. Demonstrate that there is local financial support including matching funds secured from three or more academic divisions that will support the establishment (first five years) of a signature area. Support could also include in-kind supports such as protected time, in-kind funding, or similar commitments as appropriate.
- c. Outline a broad and planned engagement strategy (i.e., how researchers and research participants will be engaged throughout the research process and beyond in activities such as workshops, brainstorming sessions, community events, townhall events, outreach activities, meetings, conferences, interdisciplinary training opportunities, team grants, etc. The engagement strategy also prioritizes establishing and maintaining good relationships with Indigenous researchers, participants, Knowledge Keepers, and communities that are long-lasting.)
- d. Provide a detailed plan to advance research in the signature area, including engagement/inclusivity/communication activities, knowledge mobilization, leads or those accountable, roles and responsibilities of team members, timelines, quarterly milestones, deliverables, and impacts.
- e. Provide a communications and information sharing plan for the signature area.
- f. Identify where potential common elements between signature areas exist including cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches to provide synergy and other added value.
- g. Outline a sustainability plan. While USask may champion a signature area initially (e.g., first five years), there needs to be a clear plan for sustaining the area over the longer time frame. A feasibility plan should be included for securing outside funding sources, local, national, or international organizations to support the signature area beyond this start-up period, with a focus on new opportunities afforded to a productive signature area team.

Process for Developing a Signature Area

All proposals will follow the guidelines outlined in the “Signature Area Pitch Guidance Document” (<https://vpresearch.usask.ca/documents/initiatives/sa-renewal/signature-areas-renewal-pitch-guidance.pdf>).

A circle of scholars will be established to build connections and develop a plan for a successful signature area:

- i. Building a circle of scholars from the ground up in each of the signature areas will ensure we can identify grand challenges where the University of Saskatchewan can make big advances.
- ii. Each multidisciplinary team will develop its own research strategy for achieving results and the strategies will be reviewed by the USask Signature Areas Steering Committee.
- iii. Once approved, our institution will invest to help the groups achieve their goals (i.e., help identify and line up the three or more academic visions to support the signature area).
- iv. Different signature areas may launch in different years to allow time for the Circle of Scholars to discuss and formalize their strategies. Once approved, each signature area will be implemented and monitored through dashboards.

Administrative support will assist with essential team-building activities:

- i. A project manager is needed for each signature area. Funding for the project manager will come from the signature area budget secured from three or more Academic Divisions (see Funding Criteria- Local Financial Support). Roles and responsibilities of the project manager include organizing all activities, meetings, reports, and other duties for the entire signature area and all of the various subtheme activities.
- ii. Supports to be provided by USask:
 - a. Research Facilitators (already embedded in various areas)
 - b. Governance and oversight models
 - c. Strategic Planning
 - d. Branding and Communications Strategy
 - e. Sustainability Planning (e.g., Government, partnerships, donors, industry)
 - f. Performance Budget Reporting
 - g. Staffing assistance (e.g., drafting job descriptions, HR)
 - h. Supports for Academic Leads & Senior Staff such as mentorship, operational templates (e.g., for budgeting and reporting)
 - i. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (support to ensure)

Criteria and Process for Evaluating a Signature Area

The following criteria and processes are meant to ensure:

- i. Demonstration of impact and contributions to a signature area includes more than simply counting activities people are already doing as individual researchers or through very narrow collaborations (e.g., check off a box in UnivRS).

- ii. Protecting individuals not authentically involved and included in a signature area from being misrepresented as contributing to that area.

Criteria for Evaluating Signature Areas:

Criteria: Quarterly milestones document: reported by Director and Executive/advisory committee to a USask Signature Area Steering Committee (same for all signature areas).

Criteria: Annual report: Signature areas will be evaluated every year to ensure satisfactory progress and provide opportunities for feedback for course corrections. This information is integral to assessing if the signature area is on track.

- i. Annual reports will address progress that has been realized. Examples could include:
 - a. Team-building faculty salary awards, such as Research Chair positions and new faculty hires.
 - b. Increased interdisciplinary training and mentoring of academic or community researchers, including trainee awards.
 - c. Applications submitted for new funding and successfully awarded to support the enhancement of the signature area, such as operating grants and infrastructure support to the team.
 - d. Publications that include multiple members of the signature area team, particularly those with co-corresponding authors.
 - e. New innovations and ventures that have resulted from the signature area team.
 - f. New or strengthened partnerships that have influenced decisions, policies, or improved standards of practice.
 - g. Changes in decision making or policy by individuals, communities, organizations, or governments.
 - h. Invitations to contribute to and/or lead national and/or international programs or events.
 - i. A full budget report with funding secured, and expenditures incurred (i.e., project managers, seed funding programs, etc.) along with an assessment of the monetary impact of the signature areas to the university
 - j. And any other evidence of progress and impacts.

Process for Evaluating a Signature Area:

Process for Quarterly Milestones: Each signature area will provide a report (both quarterly and yearly) of milestones, as indicated in the actions plan, to the USask Signature Area Steering Committee for feedback regarding adequate progress, questions, clarifications, suggested changes.

Process for the Annual Report: Provides accountability by addressing the Criteria for Evaluating Signature Areas shown above.

Process for Annual Review by External Review Panel of Experts: An external panel of experts will be engaged to assess topics of each signature area to allow for course corrections and independent assessment of progress and success. Each signature area will be reviewed by experts in that area through face-to-face or virtual half-day meetings. The composition of the review panel can be from suggestions from the Signature Area Director/Executive and with suggestions/input/approval by the USask Signature Area Steering Committee.

Criteria and Process for Disestablishing Signature Areas

Criteria for Disestablishing a Signature Area:

If unsatisfactory review by either:

- i. The USask Signature Area Steering Committee
- ii. or the External Review Panel.

If a signature area receives an unsatisfactory review by either the USask Signature Area Steering Committee or the External Review Panel for three years in a row, the signature area will be disestablished.

If Signature Areas Directors/Executive request disestablishment of their signature area at any time, allowing for a smooth transition over six months as detailed in the process below (see Process for Wind-down of Signature Areas).

Process For Disestablishing a Signature Area:

Process for Annual and Ongoing Communications: Communicating unsatisfactory review to signature area leadership at least annually (if not more often) from the USask Signature Area Steering Committee and/or External Review Panel, with suggestions for changes/improvements to become satisfactory.

Process for Disestablishing Signature Area: After the third unsatisfactory annual review, the signature area will be disestablished and removed from USask info/website, no further support provided.

Process for Wind Down of Signature Areas: Six months of prorated funds already secured for the signature area can be used to wind down operations (staff supports etc.) and any balance of funds (prorated for time remaining) will be returned to the funder.

Other recommendations and analysis

Moving forward, we suggest a clearer link between signature areas, the USask strategic research plan, and the university plan:

- Currently connections between university plan, strategic research plan, and signature areas are not clear; they appear to somewhat “exist” separately from each other.
 - Missing clear reference to each other/relationship with each other.
 - A graphic may be helpful here – currently there is a graphic for the strategic plan and a graphic (the weave) for the university plan.
 - See appendix for suggested graphic connecting signature areas to the strategic research plan.
- Consider alignment of timelines for revisions to/renewal of strategic plan and signature areas – the two should “evolve” and be revised/renewed together.
- Consider connecting the two more clearly through themes – see some of the U15 examples – make reference to strategic plan on signature area site/in signature area description; tie research strategy (themes) and signature areas together.
- Frequent feedback from signature area engagement sessions was the need for more inclusivity, the wording of the strategic research plan is more inclusive (when compared to current signature areas); use similar wording/phrases in the description of the revised signature areas – demonstrate alignment of signature areas and strategic plan.
- Strategic plan – simplify/streamline (or summarize) the message, too many “categories” make the current strategic plan document confusing. Categories used include:
 - Commitments
 - Goals
 - Guideposts
 - Signature areas

Additionally, consideration should be given to the distribution method of information regarding signature areas and other USask initiatives to faculty to ensure those affiliated with centres or other organisations (e.g., Cancer Agency , SHA) receive all communications sent to USask researchers.

Concluding remarks

The Signature Areas Advisory Circle has found the tasks assigned by its terms of reference (attached) both challenging and rewarding. Our work has led to much reasoned debate and sometimes passionate exchange by individuals with diverse perspectives. We have learnt much from one another and a circle aptly captures the spirit of reconciliation with acknowledging our past and working to build good relationships through our research. It is essential that the members of the university community feel connected and value the research happening at our university, even if their own work is not directly related to current signature areas. This report articulates the Advisory Circle's considered recommendations and advice to the USask Vice President of Research.

Appendices

Suggested Prairie Sunflower graphic linking signature areas with strategic plan, draft suggestion

Signature Area Reporting Structure, draft suggestion

U15 EScan completed by the Signature Area Advisory Circle

Signature Area Advisory Circle Terms of Reference

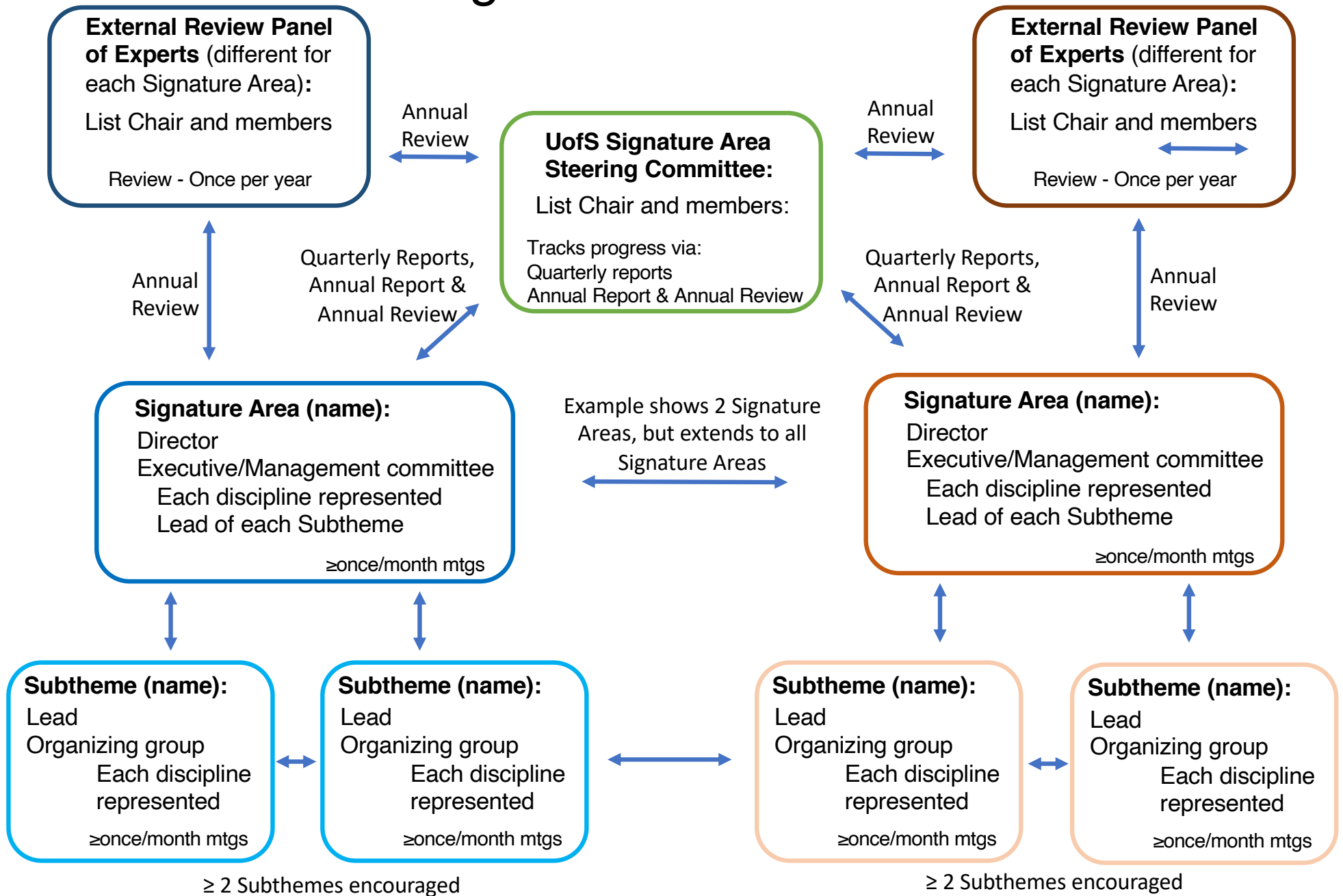
May 2021 Engagement Summaries & Survey Results

CHASR Report



Proposed Prairie Sunflower graph connecting the USask strategic research plan with its signature areas. The flower petals are connecting to actual research/researchers in those signature areas. The graph further allows for movement and changes in alignment of the layers making up the centre of the sunflower. This symbolizes interdisciplinarity and responsiveness to emerging research themes. From the centre of the flower further emerge the “seeds” spawning future research.

Organizational Chart



Environmental Scan U15 Universities and “signature areas” (SA) or equivalent

As of 28 June 2021

U15	What do they call signature areas? (SA)	Statement of Purpose	SA Definition	Criteria for SA Selection	Info about inst'l Investment (e.g. leaders, funding, supports, incentives, outputs)	Other notable information	Approach to emerging areas of priority
<p>1. UBC https://research.ubc.ca/vpri-competitions-initiatives https://research.ubc.ca/about-vpri/strategic-plan https://research.ubc.ca/</p>	Initiatives or clusters	<p>In partnership with universities, industries, government and communities worldwide, our research discoveries are hugely influential. They are advancing new knowledge and have led to countless new products, treatments and services.</p> <p>Thanks to researchers at our two campuses and affiliated teaching hospitals, UBC ideas, innovations and discoveries are improving lives around the world.</p>	<p>UBC is a research powerhouse. We are among the world's leading universities for research across many fields. Our research has had a profound impact on several areas of society. Continued success requires both disciplinary depth and collaboration within and across disciplines and communities. It demands the creation of new knowledge and its accelerated translation into action. It also necessitates resources for research services that enable researchers to</p>	<p>Our work as a public university is represented by four core areas: People and Places, Research Excellence, Transformative Learning and Local and Global Engagement.</p> <p>These core areas form the building blocks for our continued success, and guide how key initiatives are prioritized across the university. Even though UBC has considerable strength — and exciting new activity — in all four core areas, there are clear opportunities for progress which the university sets out to address through Shaping UBC's Next Century.</p>	<p><i>Strengthen shared infrastructure and resources to support research excellence</i></p> <p>UBC is improving support for researchers across the university through enhanced core facilities, spaces and services. These are imperative if researchers are to work effectively and productively. Globally leading research in many disciplines requires sophisticated equipment that depends on significant technical expertise to build and run. By creating state-of-the-art capabilities such as the Sequencing + Bioinformatics Consortium for gene sequencing, we are</p>	<p>Indigenous Research Initiatives</p> <p>https://research.ubc.ca/vpri-competitions-initiatives/indigenous-research-support-initiative</p> <p>Research clusters are interdisciplinary networks of researchers focused on solving key challenges facing society that transcend the traditional boundaries associated with departments, institutions, and funding agencies.</p> <p>https://research.ubc.ca/vpri-competitions-initiatives/research-excellence-clusters</p>	

U15	What do they call signature areas? (SA)	Statement of Purpose	SA Definition	Criteria for SA Selection	Info about inst'l Investment (e.g. leaders, funding, supports, incentives, outputs)	Other notable information	Approach to emerging areas of priority
			<p>achieve excellence in a highly-competitive landscape. Research might lead to spinoffs that take advantage of technological developments, but impact is also to be found in projects that lead to social innovations, that inform our understanding of history, or that enrich our world through creative works. <i>Research Excellence</i> encompasses this broad vision of accomplishment.</p>	<p>In addition to the core areas, the plan outlines 20 strategies that are helping to shape UBC's future. There are rich connections between the strategies, themes and core areas outlined in this plan. Most embrace multiple facets of the university community and many engage our external partners. Each is intended to provide support and guidance to the activities of faculties, schools, departments and cross-cutting initiatives, as expressed in their respective strategic plans.</p>	<p>providing facilities, training and advice for both UBC and external partners. We are exploring ways to help researchers engage with communities and access scholarly resources. UBC is enhancing digital research infrastructure in many areas of scholarship. Priorities include Advanced Research Computing (ARC) resources, technical and scientific support for research data management, data science, and local capacity for health researchers to address data access challenges.</p>		
2. Queens	<p>1. Securing Successful and Just Societies through Scholarship, Governance and Policy</p>	<p>The SRP identifies six primary research themes that highlight a spectrum of research and embrace both</p>	<p>From the breadth and depth of research at Queen's, strengths and</p>	<p>None found</p>	<p>Themes are enabled by significant investment by national and international</p>		<p>Strategic research plan describes each of the strategic themes and sub-</p>

U15	What do they call signature areas? (SA)	Statement of Purpose	SA Definition	Criteria for SA Selection	Info about inst'l Investment (e.g. leaders, funding, supports, incentives, outputs)	Other notable information	Approach to emerging areas of priority
https://www.queen-su.ca/strategicplanning/research	<p>a. Sub-Theme: Equity, Anti-Racism and Inclusion b. Sub-Theme: Democracy, Justice and Equality c. Sub-Theme: Global Governance, Public Policy and Economic Analysis</p> <p>2. Fundamental Principles of Nature: from Discovery to Application and Innovation a. Sub-Theme: Understanding the Universe, the Planet and our Place b. Sub-Theme: Ecology, Biodiversity and the Natural Environment</p> <p>3. Mobilizing Creativity and Enabling Cultures a. Sub-Theme: Creative Production and Expression b. Sub-Theme: Society, Culture and Human Behaviour c. Sub-Theme: Resurgent Indigenous Research in Local and Global Contexts</p> <p>4. Health, Wellness and the Determinants of Human Health a. Sub-Theme: Patient-Oriented Research,</p>	<p>established and emerging strengths and priorities. Research themes link Queen's to complex problems that demand creative solutions, to national priorities and to international Grand Challenges.</p>	<p>priorities emerge that reflect a composite of factors including: research leadership, international reputation, critical mass reflected by established research centres and institutes, specialized and unique research facilities, acclaimed galleries and performing arts venues.</p>		<p>research agencies through research grants, awards and infrastructure support of facilities. Areas of priority are also influenced by recommendations from other important Queen's planning exercises</p>		<p>themes, including notable resources and infrastructure for many</p>

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	<p>Transformative Health Care and Health Promotion b. Sub-Theme: Analytics, Healthcare and Promotion across Populations and Cultures</p> <p>5. Sustainability, Environment and Resources a. Sub-Theme: Alternative Energy Solutions and Energy Policy b. Sub-Theme: Cleantech c. Sub-Theme: Protecting the Natural Environment</p> <p>6. Interdisciplinary research in materials, computational analytics and human-machine interactions a. Sub-Theme: Materials Discovery and Molecular Design b. Sub-Theme: Analytics and Digital Technologies c. Sub-Theme: Human Machine Interactions, Machine Learning, Software Analytics and Smart Infrastructure</p>						
	<p><u>7 interconnected thematic areas</u> that are designed to facilitate excellence and</p>	<p>The mandate of the Institutional Strategic Initiatives portfolio is</p>	<p>Strategic Initiatives at the University of</p>	<p>Criteria for new initiatives:</p>	<p>VPRI Role <u>Seed and build potential initiatives</u></p>	<p>They also have subthemes: e.g.</p>	<p>Have application process for new investigator-</p>

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<p>3. U of T</p> <p>https://research.utoronto.ca/reports-publication/5-metrics/institutional-strategic-research-plan</p>	<p>collaboration both within U of T and with partner organizations, and to address issues of local, national, and global importance:</p> <p>DISCOVER: Our Understanding of Humanity and the Universe</p> <p>SUSTAIN: Societies, the Environment, and Natural Resources</p> <p>PROMOTE: Healthy People, Healthy Communities, and a Healthy World</p> <p>ENGAGE: Language, Culture, Art, and Values</p> <p>ADVANCE: Governance, Diversity, and Social Justice</p> <p>INNOVATE: Technologies for the Future</p> <p>BUILD: Community and Livable Societies</p> <p><u>5 strategic objectives:</u></p> <p>Demonstrate National and Global Leadership in Research and Innovation</p> <p>Foster Collaborations, Partnerships, and Engagement</p> <p>Advance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion across Research and Innovation</p> <p>Support Integration of Research and Innovation in</p>	<p>to launch, grow, and sustain large-scale interdisciplinary strategic research networks.</p>	<p>Toronto (U of T) are cross-divisional research and collaboration are essential to address the grand challenges and associated research questions that lead to transformational societal impact.</p>	<p>-addresses a significant challenge that requires an interdisciplinary approach</p> <p>-matching funds secured from 3 or more Academic Divisions</p> <p>-path to sustainability demonstrated by the clear opportunity for external funding (a list of funding sources for interdisciplinary research initiatives is provided)</p>	<p><u>by supporting the activities listed below.</u></p> <p>Identifying grand challenges, institutional research strengths, and potential path to sustainability.</p> <p>Confirming alignment with divisional strategic priorities.</p> <p>Developing funding proposals.</p> <p><u>Support new and existing initiatives in the areas listed below.</u></p> <p>Mentorship of staff and academic leads.</p> <p>Branding and communications.</p> <p>Robust governance models.</p> <p>Trainee networks.</p> <p>Human resources.</p> <p>Sustainability planning.</p> <p>Funding.</p>	<p>PROMOTE: Healthy People, Healthy Communities and a Healthy World</p> <p>Examples of sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Human Development and Health Through the Lifespan •Molecular Medicine and The Biology of Disease •Global Health, Public Health and Health Systems 	<p>initiated proposals.</p> <p>-championed by multiple divisions</p> <p>-connect w academic leadership team in their division's research office</p> <p>9e.g. VP or Vice/Assoc Dean Research</p>

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	Student Curricular and Co-Curricular Experience Strengthen the Institutional Supports that Foster Research and Innovation Excellence						
<p>4. U of A</p> <p>Why Develop Signature Areas For The Public Good (ualberta.ca)</p> <p>Development Panel and Committees For The Public Good (ualberta.ca)</p>	<p>Signature Initiatives or Signature Areas</p> <p>The signature areas to be endorsed by Deans' Council are: Precision Health, Energy Systems, Research at the Intersections of Gender, Situated Knowledges: Indigenous Peoples and Place, and AI4Society.</p> <p>The Signature Area Development Panel recommended these areas as they clearly met the criteria that were established at the start of the process.</p>	<p>In Objective 12 of <i>For the Public Good</i>, the University of Alberta community committed developing a portfolio of signature research and teaching areas where the university is or will be recognized as a global leader. The first cycle of signature and emerging area identification was completed in Fall 2018. The overall process of identifying and developing multi- and inter-disciplinary signature and emerging areas of research and teaching will continue throughout the lifespan of <i>For the Public Good</i>, ensuring that they reflect the evolving priorities and</p>	None found	<p>Selection Criteria</p> <p>As described in <i>For the Public Good</i>, the university community will identify and support established and emerging areas of research and teaching distinction and distinctiveness, using the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National and international stature for excellence, relevance, and impact - Critical mass-opportunity for broad, interdisciplinary engagement - Grassroots leadership, participation, and support from within 		<p>Proposed Signature Areas</p> <p>In November 2017, the university launched the signature areas development process. In total, 57 proposals were submitted, reflecting a wide range of research activity across multiple faculties at the U of A. The following proposals are available for viewing by members of the University of Alberta community. Please be sure that you are logged into your @ualberta.ca Google account to access the files.</p>	

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		strengths of the university over time.		<p>our university community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stakeholder partnerships -Research partners (international, community, government, industry) -Capacity to shape and align with federal and provincial research funding priorities -Student demand -Physical and operational capacity -Geographic or situational relevance 		<p>Notes to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some proposal writers have opted not to share their proposals online and we have respected their requests. -The individuals and teams putting together these proposals were asked to demonstrate the breadth and depth of the activity across multiple faculties in their proposed area. You may find that your name and work is included as part of their environmental scans of research activity at the U of A. Inclusion on a list is not being considered an indication of your support or future participation. -If you feel that your work is relevant to one or more areas listed, please contact signature.area@ualb 	

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						erta.ca to indicate your interest.	
<p>5. U of M</p> <p>https://um anitoba.ca /research/</p>	<p>Signature Research Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Arctic system science and climate change -Immunity, inflammation and infectious disease -Population and global health <p>Also interesting were the 11 Key Research Themes</p>	<p>Areas of expertise</p> <p>Our Strategic Research Plan serves as a roadmap to champion research excellence. Guiding our efforts through established and emerging research strength areas and themes, our researchers address the most pressing issues facing Canadians as well as global societies.</p>	<p>These signature areas will drive institutional initiatives and investment, ensuring the research enterprise continues to be at the leading-edge of discovery and translates these discoveries to benefit society.</p>	<p>Signature areas related to themes were identified based on established strengths and were assessed by metrics such as: i) relevance to issues of priority provincially, nationally, and internationally; ii) impact on society; iii) contributions to discovery and innovation; iv) attraction of resources; v) prominent research leadership; and vi) significant collaboration and engagement.</p>	<p>Opportunities and Support</p> <p>The UM research enterprise - made up of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, students and research technicians - is supported and enhanced by access to specialized training, funding and services available through the administrative reporting units of the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International).</p>	<p>Signature Research Areas are part of their Strategic Research Plan which expired in 2020</p> <p>Within the core strategic research areas of this Strategic Research Plan, described below, three research themes have been identified as cross-cutting:</p> <p>UNDERSTANDING AND COMMUNICATING INFORMATION; INDIGENOUS RESEARCH; SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS FOR RESILIENT COMMUNITIES.</p> <p>Café Scientifique brings together experts with non-researchers (you, me,</p>	<p>The Partnerships and Innovation office helps uncover the full potential of inventions created through research.</p>

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						<p>neighbours and friends) in a relaxed atmosphere, to learn about their research and the questions it raises.</p> <p>A focus on Partnerships and Innovation</p>	
	<p>Build on our global leadership in co-operative education to provide every undergraduate and graduate student with expanded options in experiential learning</p> <p>Empower students to leverage diverse learning experiences by creating more flexible learning pathways.</p> <p>Be a global powerhouse for commercializing research, developing new enterprises and supporting business growth.</p> <p>Leverage Waterloo's vast employer network and academic strengths to deliver a dynamic framework of learning integrated work for professionals seeking to thrive and lead.</p>	<p>In this strategic plan, we are building on our unconventional foundation by reimagining three broad themes for impact that will position Waterloo to develop talent for a complex future, advance research for global impact and strengthen Waterloo's sustainable and diverse communities.</p> <p>These three themes share a vision for a better world that includes the broadest spectrum of innovation – from imagination to impact.</p>	<p>IMPACT THEMES</p> <p>At Waterloo, we believe that society advances when universities are connected to the community, industry and policy-makers who shape our country and the world.</p>			<p>Three themes:</p> <p>Developing talent for a complex future</p> <p>Advancing research for global impact</p> <p>Strengthening sustainable and diverse communities</p> <p>Each has goals and objectives.</p>	

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	<p>Align our research strengths deliberately with important global challenges</p> <p>Lead globally and nationally at the interface of society, health and technology</p> <p>Create a sustainable, supportive environment for living, learning, working and discovery that is worthy of our students and University community</p>						
<p>6. Guelph https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/about-us/strategic-research-plan</p>	<p>Guelph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Agriculture and the bio-economy: • Veterinary medicine • One health • Environmental stewardship and biodiversity • Community-engaged scholarship • Creative and critical practice • Data science and informatics 	<p>Guelph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic research plan promotes and advances research strengths on which university has built reputation for quality and innovation • Plan reflects strategic framework themes • Signature areas differentiate the university's areas of research focus from those of other universities 	<p>Guelph:</p> <p>https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/system/files/University_of_Guelph-SRP_2017-2022.pdf</p> <p>See pp. 15 to 17 for signatures areas definition/description</p>	<p>Guelph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic research plan includes five research principles, six overarching themes and seven signature areas • Signature areas differentiate the university's areas of research focus from those of other universities 	<p>https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/discover-our-research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of research strengths • Research publications • Research chairs • Facts and figures • Centres, institutes and groups • International research • Find a researcher • Videos 	<p>Office of research vision & mission: https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/about-us/mission-statement</p> <p>Our path forward: http://strategicresearch.uoguelph.ca/</p>	<p>Not found</p>

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<p>7. USask https://research.usask.ca/research-excellence/signature-research-areas.php</p>	<p>USask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture: food and bioproducts for a sustainable future • Energy and mineral resources: technology and public policy for a sustainable environment • Indigenous peoples: engagement and scholarship • Synchrotron sciences: innovation in health, environment and advanced technologies • One health: solutions at the animal-human-environment interface, • Water security: stewardship of the world's freshwater resources 	<p>USask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of research and scholarship that bring the USask distinct recognition and help to position USask among the most distinguished universities in Canada and among the very best in the world 	<p>USask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://research.usask.ca/research-excellence/signature-research-areas.php. 	<p>See same link as signature areas definition</p>	<p>Research.usask.ca has a “research excellence” and “our impact” dropdown tab</p>	<p>Reflecting on signature areas document (already shared with circle members)</p>	
<p>8. Dalhousie https://www.dal.ca/research/SignatureRe</p>	<p>Signature Research Clusters: Sustainable Ocean; Healthy People, Healthy Populations, Healthy Communities; Clean Tech, Energy, the Environment; Culture, Society, Community Development; Food Security.</p>	<p>What are Dalhousie's research strengths? Our research efforts focus on five Signature Research Clusters, and are informed by two cross-cutting themes: Big Data and</p>	<p>Our goals are ambitious, as we seek to leverage our core strengths, partner globally and solve some of the most</p>	<p>In our Strategic Direction for the next five years, we will be guided in our strategic decision-making by a commitment to four key pillars: propel,</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>For each theme offers goals and units that are involved. Indigenous is only mentioned as a focus are under culture.</p>	<p>N/A but interested in locating cross-cutting themes.</p>

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searchClusters.html		Innovation & Entrepreneurship.	complex issues of our time.	connect, partner, impact.			
9. Calgary	<p>Our three Research Priorities — Matching Strengths with Opportunities, Increasing Research Capacity, and Driving Innovation — combined with a commitment to nurturing campus culture will propel the University of Calgary forward in our quest to achieve our refreshed Eyes High Strategy 2017-22.</p> <p>Six Strategic Research Themes + Two emerging areas based on commitment to Matching Strengths & Opportunity: Energy Innovation, Infections, Inflammation & Chronic Disease, Human Dynamics in a Changing World, Biomedical Engineering, New Earth-Space Technologies, Brain and Mental Health, Child Health and Wellness, One Health.</p>	We will demonstrate through discovery, creativity, and innovation the impact a research-intensive university can have on societal goals and aspirations, and we will create a student experience that will produce the next generation of leaders.	Society benefits when scholars focus their collective effort in areas of strength. We create synergies that energize our researchers around issues that are globally relevant and of great importance to our stakeholder communities. We demonstrate leadership in areas of strength and monitor all areas of the academy for emerging ideas. We will also refine the ways in which we measure the	In our previous research plan, our university identified six priority areas where we had national and international scholarly excellence, and we could bring together scholars from many disciplines to tackle some very important research themes.	By building a Confederation of Scholars from the ground up in each of the Strategic Research Themes, our scholars were able to identify grand challenges where they felt the University of Calgary could make big advances. Each multidisciplinary team developed their own research strategy for achieving results and the strategies were endorsed through our processes. Once approved, our institution invested to help the groups achieve their goals. The six research themes were launched in different years because it took time for the Confederation of Scholars to discuss and formalize their strategies. They are	<p>Create the Hunter Hub for Entrepreneurial Thinking</p> <p>Create and coordinate venues for and facilitate programs and activities across entrepreneurial activities. our campuses.</p> <p>Transform the university into an 'early adopter' and 'test bed' for research ideas and technologies</p>	<p>Convene multi-faculty teams to discuss emerging areas where the University of Calgary has significant research capacity and excellence to lead research initiatives.</p> <p>Coordinate discussions with faculties to support the development of their research strategies.</p> <p>Explore emerging cross-cutting campus initiatives, such as child health, cybersecurity, one health, and precision medicine</p>

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			impact of our work and share our scholarship.		now being implemented and, through our dashboards, we are monitoring our progress.		and precision public health.
10. Ottawa https://research.uottawa.ca/about/strategic-areas-research	Strategic Areas of Research 4 strategic areas	Guiding investment and activities		Themes were proposed by each of the faculties (2 established themes, 1 emerging theme)	New faculty appointments (5 new positions in one department) and Chair positions placed within the strategic areas of research		Each faculty was asked to identify an emerging area
	5 bullets to highlight cross-cutting opportunities	Intended to help focus activities		The group of vice deans collated the lists and there were "negotiations " to establish the final list	Evaluations for CFI considerations guided by the theme areas		
11. McGill https://www.mcgill.ca/research/about/srp#Research%20Excell	Research Excellence themes (7) Also have 5 core commitments. See notable info for details.	Group McGill researchers into broad areas of strategic importance (Themes) Used as a roadmap for setting institutional-level objectives & supporting both disciplinary & interdisciplinary research.	Existing strengths. Classification is designed to help generate and reinforce novel linkages that address issues of local, regional, and global importance	Not listed how themes chosen	Not available	On website click on the theme and see examples of research in that area. 5 Commitments: Fostering Creativity, Promoting Innovation, Problem Solving thru Collab & Partnership,	

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ence%20Themes		Defining themes that cut across these entities is a difficult but necessary challenge to promote areas of collaboration with partners, attract people and resources, and envision a research future emerging from existing strengths.				Promoting EDI, Serving Society. Strat Plan describes the scope and reach of research enterprise through each of 7	
12. Laval https://www.ulaval.ca/en/research	Major Research Areas 1) Society, cultures and the Arts 2) Sustainable Health and Wellbeing 3) Northern Sustainability 4) Ethics, Governance and Social Organization 5) Responsible Management of Natural Resources 6) Humans In their Environment 7) Intelligent Communities and their Technologies and Logistics	Research and Innovation Université Laval's accomplished and respected professors make the institution a world-renowned hub for research and innovation. Armed with a transdisciplinary approach, they are committed to making positive impacts in the communities where they work. Some contents are available	From research Plan: "The plan focuses on the dialogue between research teams and close collaborations with public and private partners at the local, national and international levels." The Plan also focuses "on high-priority questions around sustainable development, health and wellness, good governance,	From Research Plan Priority #1: Mobilize Around Societal Challenges 1.1. Create a society where health and well-being are sustainable; 1.2. Explain how humans develop in their environment; 1.3. Understand societies, their cultures and their arts; 1.4. Model intelligent communities, invent their technologies and their logistics; 1.5. Manage and develop natural resources in a responsible manner; 1.6. Consolidate and	From research Plan: Key strategic performance indicators > New faculty appointments > Number and types of research chairs > Number of research projects led or coordinated by UL faculty > Number of local, national and international partnership projects led or coordinated by UL faculty > Number of graduate students supervised > Student graduation rate	From the Research Plan: Research Vision: "In order to fully play its role within Québec and Canadian society and the international scientific community, Université Laval will work to consolidate and enhance its stature as a major research and innovation institution that embraces the future and is open to the world. Université Laval will continue to serve as a cornerstone of its community, both	New Research chair to support food autonomy in Quebec. Other projects: 1) International Observatory on the Societal Impacts of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Technology 2) Sentinel North is a leading-edge program in northern research, optics and photonics, and health that brings together researchers and national and

U15	What do they call signature areas? (SA)	Statement of Purpose	SA Definition	Criteria for SA Selection	Info about inst'l Investment (e.g. leaders, funding, supports, incentives, outputs)	Other notable information	Approach to emerging areas of priority
			<p>norther development and the cultural vitality of our society.”</p>	<p>develop Northern sustainability; 1.7. Engage actively in ethics, sound governance, and social organization</p> <p>Priority 2: Build research capacity and support the dissemination of Université Laval research through four areas of action:</p> <p>2.1 Support and promote excellence in research and innovation 2.2 Stimulate and promote regional, national, and international partnerships and collaborations 2.3 Encourage research through and for training, and promote the achievements of students and post-doctoral fellows 2.4 Encourage and promote innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Student employment rate > Number of postdoctoral fellows > Number of research professionals > Total funding obtained from Université Laval > Strategic funding secured (Canadian Foundation for Innovation, strategic groups) > Number of published articles in the first percentile every year > Number of co-authored publications (lead author or contributor; locally, nationally, internationally) > Number of book publications and book chapters > Number of invitations to lecture >Commercialization: invention disclosures, 	<p>through its humanist approach and its ability to educate tomorrow’s leaders, and undertakes to expand the frontiers of knowledge by ensuring its transfer and creating innovative, sustainable solutions”</p> <p>“To make this vision a reality, Université Laval has adopted a strategy based on the belief that tomorrow’s solutions to the complex questions of today will emerge from a solid research and innovation base and the interplay between key disciplines.”</p> <p>“This strategy is expressed in two main priorities: 1) Mobilize the Université Laval</p>	<p>international partners to address multidisciplinary issue</p> <p>3) Launched in 2013, Alliance santé Québec (AsQ) is a pioneering research and innovation partnership in the health and social services fields in the greater Québec City area.</p> <p>4)Institut nordique du Québec (INQ) brings together the best talent in northern research to foster innovation and creates synergy between researchers and the communities that benefit from their work. INQ provides governments, northern communities, and</p>

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					number of patents, consultancy contracts, royalties > Social value: number of links with agencies and duration of relationship	scientific community around seven major scientific and societal challenges that transcend institutional structures and correspond to our current research strengths and paths to future development; 2) Support research capacity building and dissemination”	the private sector with the knowledge and personnel required for sustainable development in northern Québec and the Canadian Arctic. 5) Alliance culture+numérique encourages stakeholders in the Québec City area to join forces by bringing together organizations, businesses, and individuals with a common interest in developing projects and initiatives that link culture and digital technology.
13. Montreal https://rec	Strategic Orientations: From Data to Action in Health; understanding and Creating, Sustainable Future, Life Rethought	Structuring research projects bring together cross-cutting research topics to cultivate interactions between faculty, academic units, and partners,	Five strategies are used to guide our orientations: 1. Identify cross-cutting research topics that combine various	Affirm,Support, Stimulate Training, Model for diversity and equity, Increase impact	Not made specific	Indigenous research does not seem to be a priority. Understanding and Creating brings in the social sciences,	N/A

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herche.umontreal.ca/fileadmin/rcherche/documents/user_uploadancien/La_recherche_a_UdeM/Fichiers/Strategic_plan_research_2017-2021_synthesis.pdf		<p>and establish close links between studies and research. These projects are based on unique interdisciplinary encounters whose purpose is to propose original and fruitful perspectives that offer answers to today's issues.</p>	<p>hubs of excellence and strengthen the process of starting and supporting major research projects;</p> <p>2. Facilitate the Innovation Laboratory to stimulate links between research and teaching activities and ensure their relevance in programs through the implementation of major projects;</p> <p>Strategic orientations</p> <p>3. Implement a research equity and diversity plan; 4. Increase support and training services that promote and model responsible</p>			<p>humanities, and fine arts.</p> <p>Lists specific sectors of excellence which name specific areas of research.</p>	

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			<p>conduct in research; 5. Identify policies that support broad and open dissemination of knowledge and research data produced at UdeM.</p>				



Purpose

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) is at a unique and pivotal point in time. At no point in our university's proud history has our vital core of research, scholarly, and artistic work enjoyed greater recognition – and more urgent possibility – than it does today.

In 2010, USask identified six signature areas for its research enterprise. These areas have been an integral part of the university's identity and credit as playing a critical role in elevating USask's reputation, profile, and impact as a research-intensive university. However, after a decade of being in existence, we need to examine the strengths, areas for enhancement, and future directions of the signature areas is required.

The Signature Areas Advisory Circle has been formed to support the renewal of these areas. Reporting to the Signature Areas Steering Committee, the advisory circle will define essential aspects of the university signature areas, review findings from several stakeholder engagement sessions held in May 2021, document a current state assessment based on these findings, and identify priority actions to ensure long-term success of the university's signature areas.

Responsibilities

The Signature Areas Advisory Circle will be responsible for producing a written report by July 16, 2021. This report will be received and reviewed by the Signature Areas Steering Committee, which is co-chaired by the Vice-President Research and Provost and Vice-President Academic. It will contain the following elements:

- An institutional definition for signature areas;
- An institutional statement of purpose for signature areas;
- Articulation of criteria for establishing, renewing, or disestablishing signature areas;
- A current state assessment of signature areas based on findings from stakeholder engagements in May 2021;
- Identification of critical actions and factors needed to ensure long-term success of signature areas; and
- Other recommendations and analysis, as desired.

The Signature Areas Advisory Circle's deliberations will be heavily informed by findings from nine stakeholder engagement sessions that were held in May 2021. This group is envisioned to review these findings, undertake further research where needed, and engage one another in collegial discussions in order to fulfil its mandate.

Broader engagement and/or consultation with the university community, and identification of new signature areas, will be out of scope for the circle's mandate. These activities will be under the purview of the Vice-President Research, Provost and Vice-President Academic, via the Signature Areas Renewal Steering Committee.

Membership

The Signature Areas Advisory Circle shall be comprised of the following members who volunteered to support the Vice-President Research in the renewal of USask's signature areas:

1. Trever Crowe, Associate Dean Research and Graduate Studies, College of Agriculture and Bioresources
2. Angela Jaime, Vice-Dean Indigenous, College of Arts and Science
3. Lisa Vargo, Department Head of Art and Art History, College of Arts and Science
4. Tracie Risling, Associate Dean Research and Graduate Students, College of Nursing
5. Deborah Anderson, Professor, College of Medicine

6. Julia Montgomery, Associate Professor, Western College of Veterinary Medicine
7. Kerry McPhedran, Associate Professor, College of Engineering
8. Vince Bruni-Bossio, Department Head of Management and Marketing, Edwards School of Business
9. Kavitha Ramachandran, PHD Candidate, College of Medicine
10. Kristine Dreaver-Charles, Instructional Designer, Distance Education Unit
11. Christopher Martin, Executive Officer, Office of the Vice-President Research
12. Tonya Wirchenko, Manager of Executive Initiatives and Projects, Office of the Vice-President Research

Meetings

The Signature Areas Advisory Circle will meet multiple times between June 3, 2021, and July 16, 2021. Meeting frequency will be determined by the membership. Due to the global pandemic, meetings will be held virtually.

A Chair shall be appointed by the membership at its inaugural meeting, and the Secretary shall be the Manager of Executive Initiatives and Projects (Office of the Vice-President Research).

Reporting

The Signature Areas Advisory Committee will produce a written report and recommendations by July 16, 2021. This report will be submitted to the Signature Areas Steering Committee via the Vice-President Research for consideration.

Resources

The Signature Areas Advisory Committee will be provided access to modest financial resources and in-kind contributions by the Office of the Vice-President Research to support its work. Further resource requests will be made to the Vice-President Research by the Chair through the Secretary.

Have we achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? Why or why not?

- Intl partnership specialist, student recruitment officer – have heard from international partners about what they think of USask – world recognition in this area, major Ag College in Canada.
- Research funding received in this area – compared to other colleges, high level of research funding.
- USask highly recognized in Canada and QS 2021, #82 in Ag and Forestry – top university in the world in this subject area.
- Local, national and international
- USask world famous with Global Institute for Food Security
- Founding part of USask – well recognized in Canada
- One of the first colleges I was aware of when coming to Saskatoon; foundational college
- Agriculture program is well-ranked – mixed opinions on how accurate these rankings are
- Important to see what difference we make in the province, to people who live here
- Canadian agriculture programs in general are very well ranked, coast to coast
- Always knew it was a top tier program in the world
- Possible measure – kinds of infrastructure – faculty, students, Chairs recruited; also investments in physical infrastructure – land availability, crop development centre, greenhouses – a lot of work that has been going on in this signature area
- Relationship alignment with Saskatchewan provincial government strategies is good – agriculture food exports increased 55% last year – speaks well about relationships with local producers, industries and government.
- Bai Yuguang – on campus yes but are we the best in the world no
- Tim Sharbel – feel less connected with the global scientific community. Website and lack to two languages, missing passion and joy for the work. Doesn't like measure, wants to measure passion.
- Marcy Hildebrand – Events office and involved with the funding announcements – How are we doing – SRW we don't do well. We tend to communicate too close, Saskatchewan focus versus National and International. Marcy – we are not maximizing our impact.
- Peter Phillips – we have no objective criteria to understand and measure we will not satisfy ourselves or anyone else. Peter shared that the USASK wanted to make sure his organization didn't overreach and focus on Saskatchewan, Canada was too big. In contrast to GIFS
- Dean Hall – What are our Graduates doing. We do a good job connecting local alumni with USASK but not as well internationally. Connectiveness at a global level could be better (Tim gave an example based on his
- Ian MacPhedran – IT coordinator for Ag Bio, engineer by training, collaboration is something very important. Working between major schools, local, domestic and international is something I see US colleges doing.
- Luke Muirhead - Facilities Strategic advisor for Ag Bio. New Dean, Digital Ag, cold space, infrastructure - \$ for infrastructure. Measure ourselves through collaborations.
- Andrea Eccleston – Focused on rankings

- Steve Webb – need measurement where are we are. I didn't know that USASK self-limited as per Peter's example. How do we be the University the world needs
- We've not achieved pre-eminence in animal science, biotechnology and bio-economy.
- Pre-eminence was achieved in individuals but not due to institutional support.
 - Academics not coupled with signature areas.
- Pre-eminence was achieved at unit levels, e.g. CDC & Soil Science, but this has not been translated to larger initiatives.
- The U of S has not leveraged its provincial Ag expertise to establish worldwide pre-eminence.
- We only rank 104th worldwide in Ag School ranking.
- Ag is so broad and gained prominence in some areas but cannot suggest that we have achieved this in all areas.
- Many disciplines go into supporting this (comp sci, Light source, Agbio), can be challenge with separation. SO, trying to bring together the different areas but there is still siloing due to the label Agriculture and not using a name that includes all the different stakeholders
- What USAsk is known for and plant researching centre and brings it together an eclectic group and how computer science and need to include this area and to be more inclusive
- Light source- is known for being involved in various agriculture areas
- Diversity within Agriculture geno mix, food processor, etc... work in Med and Engineering, Comp Sci. and Vet Med
- What does pre-eminence mean: important to define this
- Based on national research we are not a leader in Canada
- Area is very Broad to say we are pre-eminent in the whole industry as a whole. So, where are we pre-eminent vs eminent??!!
- Sense of Identity. Where do we belong and fit in and how can we work together?
- Is goal to be #1 in certain areas or all of Agriculture?
- Norris asks: how can measure pre-eminence? What should we be looking for within disciplines associated with Agriculture?
- Ajay: Reputation, beyond SK and beyond Canada. E.g., Training, Research
- Rex: Impacts, example – Crop Development Centre, with an eye on commercialization. Three areas to consider: production, sustainability, safety. USask has focused on production but it's now likely time to focus on sustainability and food safety (question: shouldn't we be working more closely with Canadian Food Inspection Agency?)
- Ajay: How are we regarding societal benefits?
- Terry: Need to break the discussion into sectors of agriculture. i.e., Food production and products.
- But there a paradigm shift is underway. What about finished products? Start up companies? Should we have a Western Canadian focus? What about action on climate action?
- Norris asks about measuring USASK successes compared to economic goals; for examples, provincial goals and current outputs (about \$17 billion in ag exports in 2020) or rising federal growth objectives for the sector (production and export goals, based on Ag Canada or related goals from the Industry Strategy Council)?

- Norris asks about UN Sustainable Development Goals? (Examples: zero hunger, innovation, climate action) as a method of measuring pre-eminence.
- Terry: social license issues coming to the fore, especially regarding beef and grain.
- Norris asks about carbon sequestration and agriculture. Offers examples of data from the CLS, suggesting that there is likely room to double Canada's agri-forest sector's volume of CCSU. Is it time for the University of Saskatchewan to play a lead role in creating an international protocol in this area? Recall the Cairns group from Australia, established in the 1980s, with now about 20 members, consisting of a ¼ of the arable land in the world.
- Ajay adds that there is room for leadership in bioproducts, biomaterials, bioenergy. Look at the success of zero-till agriculture.
- Terry and Rex: highlight opportunities associated with agricultural economics on the future of agriculture regarding carbon and climate. They ask about connections to engineering, especially with \$170 per tonne carbon tax increases which will put an emphasis on technologies and talent.
- Questions were raised by several participants about ways to raise the profile of ESG principles as well as connections with agriculture customers. Should the University of Saskatchewan play a greater role on blockchain technologies and tracibility. Better connecting farmgate with forks?
- Again, a consensus emerged regarding social license. The University has a potential role to play here.
- There was a clear consensus among participants: there is a need to better understand the VALUE of agriculture and communicate clearly to various stakeholders, including customers at home and around the world.
- There was also consensus about the need to better understand digitization within the agriculture space. This is an area where additional support is needed.
- There was a consensus regarding the need to understand and foster scale-up opportunities.
- A sense that Saskatchewan is losing ground to Alberta in the agriculture innovation space.
- A consensus emerged regarding lessons learned from other sectors, with specific reference to the lack of investment capital in Saskatchewan.
- A question emerged regarding ways to better coordinate efforts on campus. This is an area where additional support is required.
- As international partnership specialists, I'm a former recruitment officer, and had experience to hear from international partners. Ag is world recognized, and prospective students they say that we are the major institution in Canada with respect to Ag.
- Research funding received in this area – College of Ag is largest funding recipient across colleges. The difference was big compared to other colleges.
- In this signature area we are doing well to be recognized internationally. Cited two rankings: QS 2021 number 82 in world and in the THE 401-500 in the world.
- We are a top university in the world in this subject.
- Research funding in this area also internally we have received significant amount. Very famous in the world: GIFS, GIWS. Speaks highly to our achievement in this area.
- Investments in infrastructure.
- Recruitment: people, grad students, faculty, research chairs, MOUs and international partnerships are all signs of strength.

- Alignment with provincial government development strategies: Ag Food export occupies 55% of total export. Speaks highly of our achievement with g and the good relationship with local producers, industry, govt.
- Probably not. Partly because we are new to things. Lagging and do not always have the necessary facilities and equipment.
- It is not even totally clear what preeminent means. We have individuals who probably are. It is less clear that we have permanence in the signature areas. No real benchmarks.
- Signature areas are mostly just click boxes. No real framework to unite them or even perhaps within.
- Soil Science is the best in Canada. This is measured in many ways NSERC, papers etc.
- Ability to bring things together. So, maybe good programs or people but not united.
- No obvious plan.
- By metrics we are not preeminent in rankings of top 100.
- Lack of clarity of leadership.
- Kevin: challenging question; agriculture is such a broad area; pre-eminence in some areas; many disciplines; are signature areas to promote interdisciplinary research; some areas neglected because don't always celebrate bringing together the different disciplines
- Raju: pre-eminence in crop breeding; also in crop genomics
- Dean: what university is known for and has been for a long time; brought in diverse disciplines successfully, e.g. CLS, Computer Science
- Trever: diversity, e.g. genomics, phenotyping, food processing, agriculture health and safety, engineering, veterinary medicine; what does pre-eminence mean; always "pretty good", even before signature areas; have we achieved pre-eminence; not the leader in Canada
- Kevin: can be pre-eminent in some areas
- Bob: do we have to choose which areas in which to be pre-eminent?
- Darcy: eminence in a whole bunch of fields; how to define all of them as agriculture; want people to contribute to and be part of it, even if a background/support role; goal to be number one or move entire enterprise up
- **Ian**: my impression is that USASK is one of the leaders overall. I am in computer Science, not specific Ag related field, but think we have quite positive effect internationally, so yes overall.
- **Tyrone**: current role is research assistant; when doing master's, I noticed we were working around agriculture of everything, we need agriculture basically within all variety of fields, we are doing more partnerships and collaborations now, so yes.
- **Heidi**: one of the wide range areas, pretty eminent, includes water management, environmental side, phenotyping area, so on. This area is so big and complex that we no longer have Ag-engineering department anymore. Complexity and the fact that people now specializing in various aspects, mixed ag with computer science for example, is a sign of more opportunities. So yes generally.
- **Rich Farrel**: from soil science department: we are doing pretty good, but not preeminence, maybe only some programs are, some elements are not. Overall, ranking is lower than Manitoba, something is definitely going on as we are obviously better on Ag field. We are not as good as we think. We need to work on branding internationally. We are more provincial, but not international, so we should be more international and that maybe helpful.

- **Kavitha:** need more young leadership engagement, sustainable solutions, organic, natural farming, need to work like other universities.
- **Heidi:** this is more of a communication gap issue and we will pay attention to the rankings more closely.
- **Christine:** we are definitely moving to the sustainable trend for future agriculture, ag college focused on a lot of GMO, but will be moving to organic farming in the future probably, but the way maybe long.
- There were comments related to silos and how that affects perception and desires to collaborate. AKA the wish is that the university promote that we are all on the same team (Ex College & GIFS).
- There were comments related to having a mission statement related to this topic and perhaps a focus on being “Canadas Agricultural University” in the way that Guelph is “Canadas Food University”.
- The group felt a focus on Agriculture should have been a larger portion of some of the University future state planning documents.
- There were comment related to general desires to get away from check box processes, but rather to seek out different metrics for successes. New ways of highlighting successes should be a focus (social media presence)
- The website was noted as meriting review, comments were that the info was all there but could be better formatted in a way that showcases opportunities for collaboration, success stories, current research etc.
- It was noted that when the signature areas were determined many felt there was no measurable change to the way the involved people felt. If prioritized, the feeling was that there should be more initiatives directly focused at supporting / highlighting successes.
- Maybe we have too many signature areas if we are unable to adequately support them. May have to prioritize depending on funding availability.
- Signature areas should be picked as they are areas that can find “wins”. These area were selected strategically as areas that institutional leaders feel we are global leaders in.
- The focus of success is often papers published and rankings, when it should also be considered the impact Agriculture makes to Western Canada. Need to connect these two.
- Our story needs to go past the campus boundaries and should be shared that we are aiding Saskatchewan in economic development and recovery.
- Agriculture at the U of S represents the same world class opportunity as VIDO does and should be highlighted as such.
- Some crops we hold world class status on and should host events or present on this, via presenting locally and not elsewhere.
- Objective criteria/never defined in a way that’s clear
- Missing bilingual component on our website for bilingual country
- Passion and joy with which people express their work.
- Mindset of people where you are... (UK vs. NA)
- What is our measurement?
- Pre-eminence – within province (yes), country (ish?), globally (no)? Within some but not all.

- RK: We are likely the most significant agriculture program in Canada. Guelph used to be but has lost a lot to retirement. Manitoba and Alberta would be our closest competitors. Enrolment is way up but resources have not followed suit.
- IS: Receiving the CFREF - P2IRC has been a good indicator that we are recognized as one of the top institutes. It has helped to bring together a lot of people who wouldn't traditionally have been thought of as working in agriculture. We know we are at the top in Canada, what about the US and beyond?
- RK: on an international scale it is difficult to compete with the name recognition that some of the US schools have. We do have better graduate training than the universities I've seen in Europe (France).
- What exactly is the point of the signature areas?
- KS: While the University can't make faculty research certain things the signature areas act as a prod towards certain things. They don't necessarily guarantee success but not being in a signature area can make things very difficult.
- RK: Our being on the best Agriculture universities is not because we have it as a signature area.

How might we strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

- Heightened realization of closely connected disciplines – eg agricultural engineering (former department at USask?) – OVPR champions these on a high level, but who champions them on an "on the ground" level
- Could give more recognition to joint appointments
- Someone who's department who draws on international agricultural PhDs (an Engineering field?)
- Would like young new faculty to work with GIWS, GIFS – and cross-appointed with Geography, or another department – need more formal recognition on joint appointments
- How do we sustain and champion MOUs, and support students taking jobs in connected disciplines?
- Internationalization plays a significant role in strengthening every signature area
- Pandemic has been a crisis, as well as an opportunity to see how to connect better internationally, to increase recognition and internal awareness
- Question on what the impact is of the MOUs (from the International Office's perspective) – they are not legally binding agreements; they are a strong statement to establish relationships, and may lead to developing other agreements (student/faculty mobility, supporting research projects etc., coauthored publications, recruiting students and bringing them in from overseas)
- Multidisciplinary nature of the Agriculture college – there is a significant difference between information support for research in the library is much higher than in the other fields. Research Data Management questions.
- Better connection and focus with First Nations and Metis people in the province, focus on Indigenous land and resource management; opportunities for more focus on Indigenous food security through Global Institute for Food Security
- Is there an opportunity for better community partnerships?
- Value-added processing – grain, flour etc. – possibility for strategic partnerships with Edwards School of Business, Engineering; possibility for new start-ups and commercialization – would like to see some leadership in this (research centre) to connect these high but low-hanging fruit
- How do we get more endowments to this area? Lots of interest from producer groups
- Cross sectoral partnerships and fundraising – never seen any comprehensive plan for fundraising around Signature Areas -could have a strategy on fundraising around these areas
- Interest in creating more partnerships in industry and academic areas
- \$\$ for infrastructure
- Focus more on the research side
- Website, social media

- Lack of cohesion between top researchers to support an institutional goal.
- A focus on value chain improvements.
- More engagement with Federal government.
- A focused approach that leverages individual expertise.
- Focus...what do we want to focus on and clarity around this and not be exclusive as well
- Food Security defiantly an important area but also water security that are very germane to agriculture.
- So there are areas that are supportive and less acknowledged when a press release So, do we want this signature area to be inclusive of in this broad category (can bring in groups from med, comp sci, animal science, ...) bringing a committee together to give the broad voices)
- Projections show that food production must double by 2050 to feed the world's growing population. We are working to strengthen Saskatchewan's agricultural leadership with new science, technology and policies to help feed a hungry world adequately, safely and sustainably.

Global Institute for Food Security

Canadian Feed Research Centre

Crop Development Centre

Livestock and Forage Centre for Excellence

- Gap of how we identify our involvement in Agriculture...ie. Comp sci plays an important role in many innovations but likely the comp sci area would connect to Agriculture.
- **Summarize:**
- We have not done a good job of articulating of what we are doing in this space due to the diversity and broadness
- And we may have done a disservice by limiting to top 4 things we need to think about a full inventory of what we do related to Ag and do a better job of communicating this to Campus community (internal) and external and celebrating our successes.
- How do we set up to be the place to come for Agriculture expertise and be persistent and consistent?
- Better at bringing groups together and sharing what problems are you trying to solve??
- *Create an environment where we share the challenges and problems and if we know the problems between the diverse disciplines and we can come together and support one another.*
- AAP Health (?) Why was this created? Who is responsible for making AG for pre-eminent than it is?? Who is driving and accountable, take the reins, and create an annual report for the signature area? Currently, it is everyone's responsibility and it means it is no ones.
- Giving more recognition to joint appointment across programs and encouraging prof affiliates recognition. Departmental assignment of duties is always a challenge.
- Recognition for the champions and leaders – how do we sustain our current MOUs and the movement ahead.
- Jobs in connected disciplines.
- Twin programming with partners abroad. Biol engineering rely on overseas grad students in ag.
- Internationalization plays important role to each signature area. We have to support our international relations.
- Pandemic has been a good opportunity to find other ways to connect internationally. Moving into virtual delivery. Keep developing hybrid versions of things. Support international office and the work they do. Global outreach network perspective.
- Multidisciplinary nature of the college of AgBio.
- Information support in Ag when compared to Engineering. The requests for info support for research is much higher than the other fields. In Ag, many researchers and grad students need specific training about how to acquire and manage data. Bio-informatics.
- Indigenous Land Management Certificate: CIHR and GIFS re: focus on Indig. One area that we could look on growing researchers connections. Esp as FN and Metis nations population grows.

- Community and extension work – quite a lot of partnerships with industry but there is always more to do . We are strong in beef and we could be stronger – ag animal piece. Grain farmers – what are their connections in?
- Provincial 2030 document and province’s investment and Value added processing – high dividends for producer groups. Building community partnerships . ROI is strategic partnerships with ESB, Economics, and someone who can scale up machinery and design. Consumer behaviour needs to be understood: who can buy these products and promote for the long term. Creating an ecosystem for new startups and commercialization. This is where the energy is from the province.
- See some leadership in a centre or a Tier 2 centre not on academic programming but connecting these high importance but low hanging fruit.
- Endowments coming in – how do we get more donations into the Value Added processing. Room to grow in value added processing. STEP – connection with province.
- Cross sectoral and multi sectoral and fund raising. We haven’t had Univ level or comprehensive fundraising plan for signature areas.
- Signature areas have been working well. Would like to ask senior leaders to help us create awareness to engage internationally. This will support in every way and in every direction. Website of signature areas – partner with signature area in Ag and get more specific. Not all faculty are interested in international connections. Mechanism to connect international partner to collaborate with the signature area itself?
- Could do this in terms of provincially and national comms as well. Connecting people to reach out who want to have a partnerships.
- Website is confusing. To understand what these areas are.
- CALDO agreement. Few emerging discussions about AUCC meetings and we might miss out where we used to have CIDA tier 1, 2 projects. Need track records with our partners to build this at undergrad
- Agriculture needs to be the top priority at the USask. Does not seem as though the upper administration prioritizes agriculture.
- Sara Daniels says 90% of what she does is related to Agriculture. Water is the second major thing.
- Signature areas not identified on things to improve but things we were already good at.
- Put money behind grants for reputation even if costs.
- Maybe not focussed enough.
- Pick some areas that truly are of importance and put money and resources to them.
- Raju: need to address environment and climate change
- Kevin: what will be our focus; relationship of individual disciplines to signature area; need independence and connectivity
- Trever: GIFS a logical connection to agriculture; not so clear with GIWS; driven by local challenges and opportunities; does creation of interdisciplinary groups work against focus
- Darcy: website for signature areas – agriculture is too narrowly defined and doesn’t tell the world what we really are; narrows the scope; we need to describe better what is agriculture better
- Kevin: do other disciplines feel part of it
- Bob: similar challenge as we had with new name for the College of Agriculture
- Trever: haven’t done a good job of defining and marketing agriculture; maybe we need to do an inventory and better communicate out to campus
- Carmen: recognition on campus or more broadly
- Trever: recognition at all “levels” on campus and across Western Canada
- Darcy: communication needs to be consistent and longitudinal and we need data to support our statements
- Dean: do “things” to bring people/disciplines together; money works but we need other things; disciplines need to know how they can contribute to solving problems in other disciplines

- Kevin: really supports Dean's comment above; need support to do the "other things"
- Darcy: let's bring disciplines together to have the discussion
- Kevin: many opportunities for disciplines to go to meetings of larger groups
- Darcy: how to address cross-cutting opportunities
- Trever: why was AVP Health created; do we need something similar (AVP, institute, etc.) for agriculture
- Darcy: need someone to get the group together, to provide leadership
- Dean: perhaps we need a new organizational structure, e.g. do away with departments and focus on groupings around problems
- **Christine**: too many centres with overlapping duties, no clear barriers, do we need this much resources?
- **Ian**: when we first got PIR2C, we had a lot of collaborations, researches with other people; this faded away in the last few years. We need more large scale university events, finished products in engineering, pushing combined science with Ag to more polished products.
- **Kavitha**: engage more research staffs internally. E.g: within health science, promote research work every year so the entire community would be aware of we need more promotions.
- **Heidi**: this aligns with the idea of doing more events, more showcasing like before mentioned.
- **Rick**: investment, where USASK wants to make preeminent, look at the budge as Ag college took a big hit recently. We are selling too much land, we need to have different focuses. It is difficult to do research right now, there need to be administrative decision from senior leadership. There will be a lot of retirement, are we planned for this? Areas like digital Ag is becoming a hot tub, we are still so far behind and areas like this could be invested.
- **Heidi**: we don't know where we are, hard to move, if we don't know where next level is, it's hard to figure out where we need to go. We need to understanding the research metrics for the area. Agreed that investment is the key.
- Better web presence
- Hard time finding whose published what
- What are we defining ourselves as?
- We need to be thinking bigger.
- Infrastructure support/commitment
- Website – more focus on research and through social media
- Commitment to technology and infrastructure, Cold storage, etc
- Young Dean
- Measure ourselves through collaboration – Ghana projects, etc should share these stories more.
- OPAL project – providing impact in future.
- What are we reaching for? – We have all the right bits and pieces and many of the right people. But we don't but it all together. We have people from all over GIFS, Ag, policy, law, etc but we don't put it together. We talk about InterD but we don't walk it/show it. This is a culture thing we haven't really sorted out yet.
- We don't have a mission statement that encapsulates InterD and Ag. We are arguably Canada's Agricultural Universities, but we don't say it. We don't package all we are doing together to really show this.
- What are the important roles we should be taking as researchers and how do you highlight that?
- Work with elders, indigenous, community not recognized in standards. (Andrea: See links to PESI in some of the discussion).
- Links to ranking – (Andrea: some of the discussion makes me think back to the THE slide from the reputation survey showing how disparate our national reputation is from our international reputation and how they should be more similar).

- KS: We can all agree that more money is important. Focus the discussion on how much and how should it be spent.
- TT: We are losing faculty. They need to be replenished. Departments are now having to compete for positions. With increased student numbers the load on the faculty is increasing and research programs are suffering.
- RK: I'm happy with my research program. I am concerned about the quality of the graduates as their numbers increase but the resources directed towards them remains static.
- CC: What does next level mean?
- IS: If we are the best in Canada, can we expand internationally? To compete with those big US schools that might mean raising the profile of the entire Canadian agriculture industry.
- RK: We do need to remember that we aren't New York. Those big US schools get millions in annual donations that USask will never see. We should try to be one of those schools without those resources.
- HW: We would better support the signature area by encouraging better collaborations across units (VIDO+AgBio for example).
- IS: Good collaborations are being made with computer science and with GIWS. The ability to support people outside of the traditional area of agriculture is good. A broad definition of the signature area is needed to ensure these people get included.
- KS: Attempts to build a collaboration between computer science and agriculture were made 14 years ago that didn't go anywhere. It wasn't until P2IRC that the money encouraged people to make these connections. Money helps.
- LL: UBC hosts internal cluster grant competitions to encourage and support these types of interdisciplinary connections.

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding USask's signature areas?

- Strengthening Signature Areas internationally; there are some gaps – eg – USask website is very broad in terms of signature areas, and there is not enough detail here. Hard to determine who international partners should connect with on Signature Areas – could there be a mechanism for people to connect with people in Signature Areas?
- Better communications on signature areas for provincial, national and international areas; the Signature Areas are quite broad, so how do you focus them so they can be well communicated? This is the only signature area that is so closely tied to a College -how does that play out?
- What the Signature Areas are is not all that clear to those outside USask – it is difficult to tell from the USask website what these Signature Areas mean
- CIDA – need to have a lot of HQPs, postdoc, sabbaticals with faculty visiting each other –could use good coordination between Study Abroad program, CGPS etc.
- What are we reaching for – it is not clear.
- We have all the right people but we are separated and not aligned.
- We don't have a mission statement that reflects the Ag Mission of the USASK, not limited to Ag Bio, Arts & Science, Engineering, etc.
- Not packaged and alignment. The processes and system get in the way of inter-disciplinary.
- How do we increase our ranking? Ranking in many different manners.
- What additional support has Ag received during the last 10 years to enhance our position, we have resources to maintain but not grow.
- Perhaps USASK needs to prioritize investment more aggressively
- We are in the middle of one of the world's preeminent agri-food clusters. We have Federal institutions, and national and international companies, do we self-limit our partners and cheerleaders. We have a narrow view of the university mission and even where the university is within the ecosystem.

- Lip service is often given by SLT to Ag, but not often followed by resources because of diluted efforts.
- Make tough choices about where to focus Agriculture pre-eminence?
- When was the last time that the Ag Signature Area got together in last 10 years? Need to make this a priority to come together to listen and learn.
- Who leads these Signature Areas???? Need a leader and someone to gather the successes....etc...
- University of Florida has a more inclusive title. University of Arizona no longer has colleges to be more inclusive. To move to get away boundaries/barriers so there is more cross discipline collaboration.
- Do a SWOT analysis of what it needed and missing from these signature areas (what resources do we need to alleviate this signature area as well as the others).
- What is the Plan for the Signature Area?? DO we need more space, staff....who do we come together to set a vision and create a strategy to move this forward.
- Bring the experts together to create a vision and then create a leadership resource to be accountable to facilitate and move this signature area forward.
- How can we create a cross cutting of the multi- disciplines involved in a signature area as well a multi-signature areas?
- Be more strategic for this area and other signature areas this will help to guide the confidence and knowing what we are pre-eminent in. What do people know about us??
- Be a leader and decide where the USask will be preeminent and target resources to that.
- Dean: need to figure out the leadership issue with respect to getting disciplines together
- Kevin: how to deal with multi-participation by disciplines in cross-cutting areas
- Darcy: are there gaps, limitations, assets that we need to achieve pre-eminence
- Dean: do a SWOT analysis
- Trever: activities within space are driven by individuals; do we have a plan, e.g. do we need another person, CRC ...
- Darcy: need a visioning day; don't want leadership to drive things without input from the disciplines
- **Kavitha**: strong succession planning may be of a huge help after COVID. How we manage retiring, do we have plan for senior population?
- **John**: Knowing where you want to go is essential, seems like leadership could be a bit vague to where we going. We need to have concrete goals, talking about world and Canada, we need to rank on top 5 , top 10 or what? Publications generated, research funding generated we can measure against? All based on what the goals are.
- **Heidi**: agreed on the succession planning: who do we hire in the next 20 years, do we really need to, are the trend food security, or digital Ag area? For college of engineering, we have Credit nation, we hire for undergraduate teaching so researchers are in secondary thought. We need to shift the thinking as much as we can and looking at research driving more.
- Need to invest, maybe we have too many signature areas?
- There is a story we need to tell.
- We think very parochially. We are in the middle of one of the few clean ag producing areas.
- We could be the place to be and are seen that way for many students interested in Ag definitely in the province and perhaps the prairies.
- Global leader in pulses and we present most of our research elsewhere instead of hosting here.
- One advantage – WCVM, A&S and VIDO. World-class. Same opportunity on the ag side.
- Can meet virtually for some of these meetings with the world.
- TT: We agree that we are one of the best in Canada. The next level is international recognition. Not sure how to achieve it.
- KS: What would the deliverables looks like?

- RK: Agriculture is very broad. We will need to specialize more if we want to determine what the specific goals are.
- IS: Formalizing existing cross departmental training opportunities would help. These exist already but aren't necessarily being advertised.
- RK: A lot of funding comes from producers. But less than it used to. We need to continue to be good at agronomy and continue to make an impact with industry.
- DF: Can we grow beyond our local economy and think internationally?
- RK: Difficult under the producer funded research model many work with. They want local and specific applications. Not sure where to get the money for international projects.
- LL: Everyone (internationally) has funding issues right now. Funding agencies are tending to keep funds at home, but opportunities still exist. Need to show the benefits to Canada as well as team up with international partners to demonstrate outcomes can be adapted in various contexts with a global impact.
- HW: Observe emerging issues and link with end users in the process of developing solutions.
- PS: Agriculture has an opportunity to think about its relationship with Indigenous people. Food security is a major issue, CWD and the loss of heirloom seeds. (audio cut off here but she continued)

Have we achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? Why or why not?

- **No. Not aware of major energy initiatives.** Small modular reactors and AJ's biofuel initiatives. Mining overlay research working happening across campus. Mineral side under radar.
- **No consolidated effort or momentum moving forward.** Not much oil, gas, minerals. Maybe UoR maybe ahead on that. Little pockets of strengths – chemistry on solar cells.
- **The fact that we are struggling to think of projects speaks that we have not achieved pre-eminence in this area.**
- Overall the answer was – not yet. We have many great pieces though.
- Not a lot written about the mining sector in the Signature Areas document. There is a great need for that to happen in this province.
- Why is this important for the university?
 - Such an important area economically, including industry partners, Indigenous rights holders, etc. Mining is a huge source of employment. Comes with a balance with Environmental and Rights issues.
- Unusual mining sector in SK. E.g. potash and uranium. An interesting portfolio.
- Fascinating comparison – petroleum and mining. Petroleum relatively aggressive, whereas mining relatively conservative. A lot harder to achieve pre-eminence in mining
- Food-water-energy security NEXUS is important – food and water security have flourished – energy seems to be a missing piece
- We have islands of success but nothing to tie them together
 - Individuals and small groups – who are achieving individual significance.
- Some areas which could/should be included:
 - Technologies of sustainable energy – e.g. solar panels, batteries – people in chemistry, physics and engineering working on these
 - Nuclear technologies including SNRs Small Nuclear Reactors. A huge opportunity for SK.
 - Sustainable energy – have quite a few people who are pre-eminent, as well as energy
- Does the world need an introduction to what we do. Making known our strengths and the resources that we have in the ground and around us. (Dr. Airini) The strengthening is the communicating of what we have and the expertise that we have.
- Key part: Getting the word out
- Give ourselves permission to prod and share this globally
- Building the reputation and the network
- Promoting University abroad....this signature area is not very well known
- Agree communication and awareness is key to become a global leader
- We need to be much better and sharing our strengths and successes externally
- Donald Bergstrom)We have had significant initiatives and they have fallen short.
- Provincial gov't have not found the successful partnerships that we need
- Move away from coal and move to nuclear and wind.
- We reach out to outside of Sask for solutions instead of looking at made in Sask solutions. (ie. Have the wind expertise and the nuclear has been waiting decades to come alive again)
- Mineral Processing: we have one the top test research centers and no one knows about it (used in oil sands – slurring (?)/ pipelining)).
- No faculty position specializing on this when the expertise left we did not replace this and it has left a gap.

- Run in a short fall in fortune minerals this came to be a geology problem. What is the deep geology? Lost Jim Henry....etc... lost a history to understand Sask geology and the coal businesses don't understand or care as they have a permit and they do not know what the deep impact is ...who is looking after the public expert? We need to strengthen the development in Sask geology deep impact knowledge.
- Priority is a strong plan for professor successorship when faculty retire and where we can release revenue and reallocate so it is being used to retain our talent or attract back or talent that left
- Need to use the current mining and be mindful of the indigenization. Need to have a multi discipline approach.
- We are not achieving pre-eminence from a social sciences perspective. There is a disconnect between social and physical sciences. We need more inclusion of ecology and sustainability mining and extraction and more of a focus on the policy side.
- We are approaching pre-eminence because people did not use uranium before, but with plants having opened in ON and SK, there are more opportunities. Mining and mineral processing presents a huge opportunity in this province, particularly around uranium as a clean energy for the future and the potential to mine lithium for materials such as batteries for electric vehicles, which will be very important to keep this signature area going.
- We do have the Fedoruk Centre, so it has increased awareness for nuclear innovation. However, it is less clear what is being done in other areas such as public policy and how does SENS fit in? Perhaps we are trying to do too many different things? Would it be better to focus in our efforts around uranium?
- I don't personally see eminence in energy and resources from a social sciences perspective. The focus is more on physical sciences. From social sciences it is weak and non-persistent. Looking at other colleges and schools of mining, they have a strong presence in the ecology sphere or sustainability mining and extraction, but I'm not seeing that at USask. We have SENS, but it is not obvious how much connection with signature area of mining or mineral extraction; ag econ, not connection with mining side, we don't have a mining economist...little to no connection with sig area.
- Odd place geographically from mining perspective, it is potash and uranium as lion's share, small amount of others, does that have an impact?
- We don't do hard rock mining except open pit up north or potash, but energy to the mining is big part of SK economy, pretty diverse, perhaps lack of pre-eminence is a lack of focus and we need to iron it down more....partly weak on policy side.
- Mining and mineral processing huge opportunity in this province, look at how our target for net zero in 2050 for Canada, need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, uranium is very clean energy for future; electric vehicles (EV) in near future, opportunity for EV cars need batteries or energy storage-materials like lithium or rare elements are very important we have minerals in this province. For cellphones, lithium and battery, but for cars or vehicles, huge amount of materials to make that battery, where will it come from? In SK we have mining in lithium (per lithium) rare elements? If we can mine that from engineering perspective it is very important to keep the signature area going.
- Are we approaching pre-eminence or no?
- Yes, people did not use uranium before due to disposal issues, but now using...ON and SK building plants, so improvement or applications in clean energy.
- Also have Fedoruk Centre for nuclear innovation; not an engineer, but that has providence so people know about the centre and uranium in province, but what is public policy side; technology may be better for sustainable development...how much does policy and SENS fit in?
- I know ag has been a big focus in school of public policy with gmos but not as familiar with energy policy work, but I don't know the reason.
- Not that big of a school, so work with governance more...they do stuff around innovation (Murray Fulton and Ken Coates) whether they focus on energy and mining I don't think so but it is related.

Problem at USask is we are doing a lot of different things...maybe let's focus more on uranium and not worry about being something to everybody.

- Initiative have fallen short
- The Province hasn't found the partnerships they need
- Government seems to reach out externally for research
- Wind is an untapped resource
- What is the research that enables SMR?
- What is the research that enables mineral processing?
- We need to ensure we don't lose strengths that has been established over decades by not strategically replacing faculty
- Faculty renewal needs to be strategic to maintain strengths and emerging needs
- Well positioned to be a national and global leader in this area.
- We could benefit from additional collaboration and alignment from other units (some other signature areas have funding and institutes) and we have potential to be similar to that
- Lots of good, but disparate research in this area.
- Possible lack of strategic investment and lack of personnel/faculty etc, or investments in researchers.
- Strategic investment is what we say – but Colleges/Units hire because they need to fulfill teaching needs and can't do the strategic investment.
- Matt is so busy doing research, he does not go to companies because there is only one of him, but if there were three of Matt, there could be millions more of research dollars and a lot more students supported in this area as well.
- IMI, Fedoruk? Could we leverage? (one comment was that at times it has been difficult using IMI (potash and competition between companies make it difficult to do research at one company's site over another); Fedoruk – had some internal political upheaval – and environmental side of nuclear seemed to be ignored); other opportunities, Calgary (Oil), mining industry (Cameco, Orano).
- Reclamation, to business and environment - to public policy – Indigenous on-resource development, public policy, business.
- Lack of understanding of the sector is often a hurdle to getting into the mining sector; need connections with the mining sector – doing lab-based research is not enough.
- Companies need to think wholistically from research, exploration, development, water and land management, de-establishment; reclamation.
- We need investment in undergraduate and graduate – we cannot graduate enough students to support the job needs in this sector.
- New UG degree might be important (in GeoScience); Graduate programs that are interested in site management and clean-up (there are jobs – we cannot graduate enough).
- What are our competitors?
 - U of C (geoscience department) – have a lot of connection with industry – it can encumber researchers to specific projects, which researchers may not want to do;
 - U of R Petroleum Research Centre; here in GeoScience – there is less interest in oil and gas here;
 - UBC Engineering (have an institute and program, well-funded);
 - U of T Mining Engineering;
 - Queens in Geological Science and Geological Engineers;
 - Waterloo strengths tied to specific research groups.
- We do have some chairs, but no one was sure what they are:
 - Matt Lindsay – Syncrude Chair in Geology;
 - Cameco Chair use to be in Geology (but he retired);
 - there are some Chairs in Engineering, but our groups is not aware of what they are;

- Use to be one in Geological Engineering (Lee Barber – water on mining site, but he is retired);
- Coop Chair in Soil Science on site remediation;
- NOTE: Industrial Research Chair program is cancelled by NSERC so once Matt Lindsay's chair is over, there is no other chair.
- Geology has a big push for green and renewable energy (Kevin Anstell – GeoScience of Green Energy and the Digital Economy).
- Professional organizations and large continuing professional development courses/they need this training and there is an opportunity Short court at UBC focused on Mining Law (permitting and Operations) and offered to non-law students such as engineers and geo-scientists.
- In Law – our CRC chair has written a book on Mining Law and on Natural Resource Jurisdiction in Canada; as well as Constitutional/Duty to Consult, FPIC etc.
- Our group doesn't know what connection SENS has in the energy and mining space? Faculty might be focused on environment or water. Does this include working with mining companies?
- Community engagement is positive, does this also include professional bodies? Industry? Government? (to help deliver on the economic, health and environmental missions).
- Mining has a role to play in all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (could be both positive and negative).
- We did not have much opportunity to talk about International Connections – but there are some initiatives that are being developed and should continue to be explored.
- Pockets of individuals in chemistry, Engineering – smart grids, mining reclamation (AG, GEOL); CASES
- Never had a single leader emerge that could unite across the colleges/disciplines
- May have more strength in the policy area. All groups are too small for a big foot print nationally and internationally.
- Work on renewables seems disconnected.
- Connections that happen are on a project by project basis but are missing the overarching framework. Looking at the energy security goal but then have specific focus on different energy sources/strategies.
- On mining front seem to have a cohort of industry that might be of interest.
- Energy and minerals don't fit well together
- Joel Bruneau - no, from a social science perspective we are weak to non-existent from a social science perspective; Ag Econ doesn't connect much from mining side; World's biggest potash and uranium miners in province; Lack of focus? Weakness on the policy side
- Shafiq Alam - Phasing out fossil fuel is an opportunity; Uranium is carbon free clean energy; Electric vehicles are coming which requires storage for energy - batteries need lithium and rare earths; Prairie Lithium operating in SK, lots of opportunity to move into Lithium mining; Approaching pre-eminence in Uranium
- Joel - Fedoruk center is important with Uranium side; Technology side is stronger than public policy; JSGS is focused on governance and Ag - Murray Fulton and Ken Coates on innovation, not as much of a focus on mining; We're too spread out, trying to be something for everyone
- Probably not?
- Do we have biggest issues as suggested by Karen Chad in her reflection document?
- We lack an umbrella organization or institute...there is no lead or coordinator across campus. There is a problem of having a very diverse group with diverse interests.
- What are the goals of the province in this area?
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Small nuclear reactors
- How is positionality framed within the U of S.
- Not a lot written about the mining sector, so many things that we don't know is happening
- There is a great need for this area to be of greater importance

- It is important as an economic sector strong connection to community and industry partners, significant partners including Indigenous partners
- Huge employer esp in northern Saskatchewan
- Natural connection for the university to make.
- It is an unusual mining sector, potash and uranium, different than hard rock mining
- Interesting minerals here in SK
- Traditional mining and a fascinating comparison with oil and gas, but mining is more concerned with safety, putting people underground, mining doesn't move particularly fast as a sector.
- Sustainable energy, we do have many pre-eminent people, and with energy production and distribution
- Sask Power chair, bio energy, CRC, very recognized in this field.
- As a cohesive whole, we only see blips, pieces, and little recognition, we need to be propelled forward
- Missing cohesion
- In comparison, we have a centre for global food, and global water, but we are missing the energy, the inputs
- Food is energy, and is a missing piece, water is energy
- We need leadership to put it all together, islands of strength, in different areas
- Geo chemical impacts of mining, some connection to northern communities, energy sustainability
- Uranium, SMR, controversial, but it is an opportunity for the prov and the university
- Clean energy, solar, batteries, individuals are connecting, but there is potential
- Need to join the dots
- How does this work, top down from the prov, or from money or funders?
- Is there faculty, is this something we want to do, best if these two meet
- Need engagement, from all fronts
- There is some law that obviously relates to these areas
- Good consultation going forward
- Lack of umbrella organization, diverse and scattered
- No major investment because of the above
- Clean energy, Sask Power, SMR in the future – link between Energy and Mineral Resources, public policy
- Energy security, material security, value chains, different uses of resources above and below following on from oil/gas industry
- Link with School of Public Policy

How might we strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the “next level”?

- **Research money**
- **Pull mining and energy apart.** Is energy research tightly linked to mining? Is this an area where we invest in. Focus on energy sources. How do we get research money for oils sands?
- Social sciences is more contingent than the science. Its all over the place, and **have an informal grouping for these lenses to meet or collaborate would be useful.** Bigger infrastructure with a bit of a goal or mission to coalesce these groups beyond individual interests.
- Growth may be in policy and economics side. **Each group is too small to have a big footprint nationally or internationally.** Renewable energy work is disconnected from the nuclear stuff.
- Oil and Gas is Alberta, SK may be good with Uranium. Small Reactor projects and links with Cameco may be exciting.
- **Need to connect the dots.** Have individuals and areas of strength and loosely or not connected.

- **Interconnectedness.** With respect to connection with remote communities, how do we learn, especially from the current pandemic experience and seek a shared framework moving forward? Need dual confidence building – USask to relate to remote communities, First Nations to relate to the university.
- **Money!** Many other universities have seven-figure endowments to fund the social science research in this area.
- **A concerted approach:** Needs support from the top, and upwelling of faculty engagement and connection
- **Indigenous** – needs to be appropriate consultation
- **Sustainability** – are we taking advantage of renewable resources? Would like to see more and more resources going towards sustainable resources and related initiatives.
- We do have a strength of the great resources along with solar/wind and we have the ability to create and promote our relationships with the indigenous community.
- We can be on the forefront globally of how to do this well. We can share the strength that we have in this partnership. We have indigenous populations that want to bring energy solutions to their lands and they are very open to working with University.
- We have pockets of expertise and would intentional collaboration move things ahead (Dr. Arini)? Answer is yes!! We can look to other partnership that exist and reach out.
- Is there is a dream network that could help elevate our work in this signature area?
- Partnership with UManitoba so we can focus more intentionally on building stronger collaboration/ working relationships with the Indigenous populations to build the engineering college that leads in the indigenous community. Manitoba has largest Metis population and Sask as the largest First Nations population – we need to work together and establish strategically relationships across Canada (water as done this and it has been very effective) and lead the research and work in this signature area.
- CRC Application – first college to have someone on staff that takes that third pillar (social, cultural goals)
- Energy is not just mining. We need new technology so we can use waste biomass to produce energy from ethanol, methanol, and gasoline materials and optimize the expertise we have in this area as well. This would be an area for collaboration where we could bring in agriculture and economics as it would have to be economically viable and inexpensive.
- We need people to support us and fewer teaching demands. The course load of many professors is high. It does not leave much time for research, so if we could get more teaching support, that would be a big help.
- An energy research centre would be valuable, not only because a main focus in Canada and the world is to reduce our footprint of environmental impact, but to bring researchers from different disciplines together for more meaningful engagement and collaboration.
- There is more opportunity for NSERC funding, so for social sciences researchers, it is more difficult, we could use more support for SSHRC applications. We could also use more support for community engagement. More support for under-represented groups in STEM is needed.
- Pre-eminence, critical mass of research, contracts, inventions, KMb, but think about where people know the strength is and I don't know if on communications side, if our profile (as a staff member), we don't have perception by public so focus might strengthen that area...you want broad signature areas, but need to mention what we are really great at.
- When we say energy, it is not just mining, it can come from biomass, so we need new technology so we can use waste biomass to produce energy-ethanol, methanol, gasoline from materials. We have expertise in this area, working to make portable solid fuel for outdoor use using biomass....could be ag as well so economics important in this case because has to be sustainable economically viable and cheap, so consider economics in every life cycle of materials we produce. If thinking about pure

extraction, missing out on expertise uni has-biomass, energy sources, oil will shrink over next 30y...narrower focus on what you hope to achieve, great focus, but focus more on energy sourcing, pricing, use for sustainable environment, tie more with public policy, SENS, physical sciences.

- Fedoruk Centre, less about engineering, more about how to get people to adopt, accept innovation, a lot softer than straight up engineering. A great signature area, has tons of potential for USask, but first step is go to engineering which dissipates energy away from it. Fedoruk Centre is doing something but deflects from it. Show different sources of energy diversity to show strengthen. Right now it is technology which is deep but narrow if thinking more sustainable, it needs to be more open for public policy and innovation.
- How does funding fit in with this? Nutrien's biggest funding is on food side with GIFs, I don't know if Cameco invested in Fedoruk but assume it does. Is there a connection?
- IMII-they have members from mining companies and other companies in the province so those companies put their money in IMII account which distributes to faculty members. New program 5-6y ago started with mineral processing, geological and mechanical engineering, can apply for funding from industry-Mitacs and industry, many opportunities...SaskPower burned coal to produce power rare...use in cell phones, try to extract, not from mine, but waste materials to reduce waste in environment and generate money for SaskPower.
- How could USask better support you in getting money? What does it need to do to better support in those endeavours?
- Individual researcher can get small funding, but see big picture, could make energy centre-we can apply for mass amount of funding for creating an energy research centre because main focus in Canada and world to reduce footprint of environmental impact...through IMII apply to funding for research chair student support, to make new centre, buying equipment...mine in Labrador for nickel sulfur, we have to support academia so gave \$44M to start new department and research centre in that area...for big funding, uni could take a bigger collective approach
- No doubt funding directs where we think we are going to get investments, easier for NSERC and CIHR instead of SSHRC...ag NSERC except GIFS, energy mining NSERC, Indigenous SSHRC, ...most sig areas focused on NSERC, little to no area for SSHRC apart from Indigenous...SSHRC is harder to get because more NSERC money and matching ...social sciences, more focus on targeting SSHRC side, but I need people to support and need to teach less than 4 classes.
- Especially for NSERC, we have discovery, but other program like alliance, need matching fund. If from industry and very easy to get NSERC funding from that, recently ? got \$250,000 form IMII in STEM to teach and train students in this province for mining industry, not only for research but to support community.
- SSHRC researchers seem like an afterthought, not enough integration between each of them in the development of the proposals; invited as an afterthought...
- How to draw in social sciences early? Centre for water security...has physical and social sciences side within an org, so facilitate to do that across units and campus is a lot harder. People getting to know people. Centres can be useful for that as to who gets invited, but open invitations are not helpful.
- In other institutes, engagement with social science researchers, but still need that cross fertilization in engineering, in mining, encouraging our women in mining, social science can help, how to improve access for mining...could be many ideas for collaboration.
- Airni - Engineering and Indigenous knowledge integration is an opportunity
- Don- We should develop strategic partnerships with other universities, First Nations and others similar to what we've done with the GIWS and GIFS.
- Kiela- Inventory of what we do well. Do we actually know what we do well? Do we have it documented enough to promote it?

- Its not enough to do the research and publish the papers. The information must be implemented (knowledge mobilization) to become impactful. Utilization of research will drive citations which will drive reputation and ranking. Perhaps promotion and tenure standards need to evolve to include credit for knowledge mobilization in addition to publication.
- Connections between units, researchers are not always apparent.
- Funding is important (strategic investment), but so is our organizational structure; need for some strategic leadership investments in this area.
- Involvement of indigenous communities is important and not going away (duty to consult; social license; interests represented; employment) – to set the U of S apart and align with U of S mission, this could be very much a part of this signature area.
- If we want to grow enrollment, we need to look at our programming for graduate or undergraduate programs – there is demand for student programming (see question 1).
- \$\$
- Pull apart mining and energy
- Need leadership, focused vision.
- There are costs and benefits to bringing in high flyer (CERC) – instant money, but has caused fracturing in some units. Builds reputation fast but need to re-think how to share monies, reputation, growth.
- Candidate within the university is the other model. But need to have a team to support them – facilitator, communicator, - build from the faculty up
- Shafiq - waste biomass is a source of Energy; We have expertise in this area, should be looking to more support for energy from biomass
- Joel - Pure extraction is too narrow; Broadening perspective to focus on sustainable environment vs. technology
- Chris - how does funding interact with this?
- Shafiq - IMII supports innovation, members are mining companies; SaskPower is interested in reducing coal and accessing rare earths from coal mining
- Joel - University targets NSERC and CIHR funding much more than SSHRC; SSHRC money much harder to get
- Shafiq - NSERC alliance needs industry match, easy to get NSERC funding with industry match; IMII does fund Indigenous STEM education; IMII funds training as well as research
- Tonya - How can university support researchers?
- Shafiq - OVPR or Engineering Dean's office can support research centres in, for example, sustainable energy, rare earths, Shafiq comes from Newfoundland, Newfoundland experience is that new department was created by Inco (Inco Innovation Center) to support research from nickel mining operations
- Christine - SSHRC gets supported by RASI for partnership grants
- Joel - NSERC does sometimes want social sciences in larger funding applications, but it's often an afterthought
- Are we engaging policy research appropriately or linking it to engineering and science?
- This area is challenging because opportunities for industrial partnerships might be with “sunset” industries, notable oil and gas.
- There are huge possibilities to develop a more targeted research thrust around the green energy transition, including critical materials.
- Province seems to be ready to invest in small modular nuclear reactors. We should be prepared to do some research in this area.
- Energy security as a new umbrella! Mirrors food security and water security.
- Food water are huge areas and esp for sustainability, these are energy, and is this sustainable, are we taking advantage of bio mass, solar, wind, and this is a global opportunity,

- First nations and Métis nations of Saskatchewan have to be consulted
- Connecting the dots with water food and energy side, need to be pushed forward
- Plants trees animals also are energy
- It is within the areas of energy and natural resources that the dots need to be connected, by faculty, students, leadership, Indigenous orgs, to come together to move forward in a connected way
- This will strengthen engineering and ag bio, there are some interconnectivities, but these could be better
- Post pandemic connections,
- Wahkotowin, needs to be acknowledge, and how do we live this value, and learn from this experience to be better relatable to drive shared agenda forward
- Shared consultation frameworks, need to increase faculty confidence, esp to work in norther areas, and with Indigenous cultures
- We need cultural confidence building to work with each other
- The universities that are into this area on the social side, have 7 figure endowments to support this research, at some point there needs to be investment by somebody, or by industry,
- If that doesn't come along, the U of S will not reach this level of eminence, this is a practical dimension
- le western has a major mining law program, with a lot of support, Calgary has people working in energy law and resources UBC has some as well. Law as a theory, and a sector, has great funding support, and mining finance is a good place to be in, like AB with oil and gas, and for Sask, where will we raise funds and spend it well
- Distribute and use energy, sustainable use of the whole cycle – govt, policy, economics, etc etc
- Workshops to discuss futures
- Uranium/SMR etc – alignment with govt initiatives

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding USask's signature areas?

- Resources are challenging with scattered groups funding own initiatives. Can we bring folks to further our common goals?
- Hard to get traction with competing agendas. Do we need a bigger theme to bring us together to collaborate than compete. Resources to fund joint projects as people competing for the same pots of money.
- **Money is the motivator.**
- Distinguish a space for ourselves – CREF fund for renewables (Alberta), social science piece tagged on to the end. Good work coming from Ontario. With Saskatchewan, **rural/remote is where could posit ourselves.**
- DEEP Corp – geothermal energy stations.
- Cameco – do they have money? **Are we tapping into private sector sufficiently to get funded?**
- **Area seems an odd fit – Mineral and energy don't match.** From the nuclear, pushing for some kind of concerted effort in engineering and Arts and science. Having discussions with government on small reactor working group.
- **Nuclear is the way moving forward** – real opportunity to lead. Put nuclear as a focal point and enhance our profile for nuclear.
- **Build from faculty up than rely on the hand of god to move things forward.**
- Upcoming grants discussed.
- What happens when funding for GWF is gone? Succession of funding is a problem. How do you prevent collapse and ensure continuity.
- **Listen more**, especially to elders, traditional knowledge-keepers, and youth! Get out onto the land. Get shoes off, get hands dirty. A new-old way of listening.

- **Gather the pieces.** We have a lot of the pieces. Middle-sized initiatives, on the cusp of being seen. E.g. CASER. Power systems, smart grid. One or two more big pieces needed and rally the province around it.
- **Establish a leader or leaders**, whose job it is to make this happen. At URegina – established Office of Energy and Environment. Brought in high profile Director and an assistant. Established internationally-recognized consortium. International profile resulted. Hosted international energy conference. From that flowed projects, funding, from a
- Additional comments:
 - Include in this mitigation of climate change. E.g. USask has committed to decrease in greenhouse gases. Need to hold accountable both the faculty and the leadership of the institution. Needs to be the right leader
 - University should move fast on Small Nuclear Reactors [SNRs]. Missing an opportunity. UR is taking money from Fedoruk – we should be more in this!
- What First to move things ahead in this area:
- Take Inventory of what we are successful at
- Where are we global leaders?
- How can we communicate this to campus partners as well our Sask Community to share our story
- The best thing is to approach collectively, not individually. It would be beneficial to have/be a hub.
- Over last 20 years, we invested a lot in infrastructure but not people. Do we need more machines or more researchers engaged in interdisciplinary endeavours?
- An example of a model to consider is that of agriculture where farmers each contribute to research centres as part of a checkoff program where research is then conducted on their behalf. Producers generally see it as money well spent. We could explore whether Cameco and PotashCorp would consider a small contribution per tonne extracted, uranium would give checkoffs to uranium centre, etc.
- The best thing is to approach collectively, not individually, lots of area in ON, Waterloo, hub for computer science or electrical engineering, they get lots of funding...look to SK, it is mining mineral processing ag, what is the strategic area in the province, if you collectively approach for them, they are getting billions, they could support our industry and funding agency-big group funding.
- My perception over last 20y is we built a lot of buildings and new facilities, but not filled with people to do the research, filled with capital investment as opposed to people. Do we need more machines or more researchers engaged in interdisciplinary endeavours...if that is clear from VP research, it is a positive innovation, need access to libraries and data centres-access to stats Canada...access money out of mining sector; in ag they have-farmers each contribute to research centres to do research on their behalf, explore whether Cameco and PotashCorp would consider small contribution per tonne extracted, uranium would give checkoffs to uranium centre. Because model in ag with wheat would be successful here as well.
- Talking to producers, they don't resent the checkoff, they see it as money well spent...it is not much and they get tangible results.
- I think we need to hire faculty based on a strategic research plan.
 - Current hiring has traditionally focused on filling the gaps in undergraduate teaching .
- A university is "a place where students learn in an environment of leading edge research", therefore, we need to be a place of leading edge research. This will naturally impact the undergraduate program in a very positive way and drive graduate demand.
- Risk - hiring by departments to meet undergraduate teaching demands places the focus of assignment of duties on teaching and committees.
 - Research becomes something the individual faculty develop on their own in an effort to attain promotion and tenure, often with very little support or mentorship. Promotion and tenure

standards dictated success by “secure graduate student, publish, repeat”. With no consideration for knowledge mobilization or impact.

- This also does not incentivise faculty to take the leadership on larger, strategic, multidisciplinary research grants.
- We may also be able to incentivise inter- and multi-disciplinary research. We claim its important, valued and will be recognized but too often we question faculty on what their part in the work was if their name is not first on the paper.
- The OVPR and Colleges (ADRs) could do more to guide faculty renewal.
 - Similar to what GIWS and GIFS do. They hire to meet a research goal and then decide where faculty and contribute to teaching. (not the other way around)
- Strategic planning and investment – Faculty in the social scientists (inform policy development/law); also at the science faculties and tied to graduate and UG training.
- Connection between researchers and units.
- Energy and Mining is connected to UN Sustainable Development Goals and we could use it to strengthen this area.
- Connection with Indigenous peoples and communities as part of Energy and Mining.
- How do we distinguish from AB – really a technology challenge focus. Ontario is focused on city renewable.
- Focus rural remote renewables in Sask.
- Nuclear may be a place for investment – AR, Public Policy. Small nuclear reactor group is growing and the time is right. Province interested. And addresses the environment front.
- Energy security – encompasses a wide variety of energy sources. Could focus on nuclear, but need to create space for other energy sources.
- SK is natural location for nuclear -uranium deposits, provincial interests.
- Training needed as well.
- Joel - Center for Water Security combines social sciences and physical sciences well; Physical distance is a barrier - 'the only time I meet an Engineer is at Sobey's' - centres are useful for reducing this barrier
- Shafiq - Food security as well engages with social sciences; Engineering needs more cross-fertilization; Need to encourage women in mining; In terms of accessing funding, to approach collectively is best with Social Sciences, Physical, Health, Engineering, Health Sciences, etc.
- Joel - U of S has built a lot of new buildings and facilities over past 20 years, too focused on capital investment vs. human investment; Mining can look to agriculture for model in checkoff funding? Can we implement a checkoff funding model for Nutrien, Cameco, etc.
- Tonya - These conversations are important to strategize
- There is a need for leadership to listen, to get out on the land, to listen to not only academics, politicians and industry, but also listen to elders, knowledge keepers, get out onto the land, and get some cultural confidence
- Rally the province around one or two issues, get onto the global map, like with carbon sequestration and storage.
- Climate paleontology, need support to develop international centres of excellence
- One office can develop and lead, ie international energy conference, to attract major projects that the world is willing to invest in
- Appointing leaders to these areas, that is their job to lead it, to pursue action around climate change and its impacts and how to mitigate it
- UN sustainability Development goals, commit to these, and explore the challenges and opportunities, but this will increase our credibility for the institution and increase attention to these areas of focus

- Needs leadership, but be careful how leadership is chosen, someone who knows the areas, someone that is connected to the north and to northern peoples, and this person or people need to be supported
- That office needs to be supported by engineering, ag, etc, and need the right person.
- No leadership/coordinator, strategy, what are we trying to achieve
- But success of grants using the signature area, because so broad and individual/research groups
- Reword as Energy Security
- Sustainability Strategy – UN SDG links

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:13:58 PM
Last Modified: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:15:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:10
IP Address: 108.60.189.157

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

Judging from my experience in the FLAX area we are

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

not sure ?

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

not sure again

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:20:46 PM
Last Modified: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:22:50 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:03
IP Address: 64.201.198.57

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Senior Administrator**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

I think it has not, despite truly excellent work happening here. There hasn't been as much of a vision for how to achieve pre-eminence as would be helpful and there needs to be some real prioritization around this.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Better coordination and grant facilitation, better community building

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:16:02 PM
Last Modified: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:25:04 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:01
IP Address: 24.138.9.123

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

Individuals have had success, but that has not been scaled up to USask. No overall plan, guidance, or leadership.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Leadership and a focussed support structure. USask needs an actual operational plan, not another strategic document (i.e. aspirational doc, nothing planned).

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Provide leadership. The signature areas need champions to guide and monitor them.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

A lot of the discussion was generically about signature areas, and the lack of specificity as to what they mean to the university. This is true with the Ag area. It seems the area was created by someone looking at research and saying we're good at that, but then not following up.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:51:04 PM
Last Modified: Monday, May 03, 2021 3:56:28 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:24
IP Address: 128.233.11.133

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

It has been a strong area domestically and in certain respect internationally. We need to continue to work in the international arena to have achieved pre-eminence.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

We need to look at some of the issues brought up in the discussions like faculty vs student ratio. Are we going to be a teaching institution or a research institution? Are we going to focus our efforts and incentivize collaborations or just let conversations take place with no outcomes?

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

For this area, we have to be at the top of the rankings but also ensure that we are aligned with the local industry. How do we connect and leverage external funding at the provincial, federal and international level?

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

Excellent conversation and it is clear that we have a very strong program and passionate teachers. The institution could provide more direction/support and metrics on what we are trying to achieve.

We could be clear and transparent of what those measurements are so that we can say that we are moving the needle in the right direction.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 03, 2021 4:35:15 PM
Last Modified: Monday, May 03, 2021 4:47:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:11:51
IP Address: 70.64.12.115

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

Yes - It has integrated all related areas together and it is a well recognized discipline and core of our university nationally and internationally.

No - It is lack of a lead in overseeing this signature area. It sounds very narrow as "Agriculture" which could be more inclusive.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

1. Clearer leadership and inclusiveness in this area
 2. Transparent strategy in advancing this area nationally and internationally
 3. It is not just the responsibility of the senior administrators, faculty and staff in this area or those at OVPR in advancing this area, but also a university-wide effort, such as fundraising/development priorities, student recruitment focus, etc.
-

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

1. A designated coordinator/lead in this area is needed.
 2. Renaming it to be more inclusive.
-

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

I am sincerely appreciative that Dr. Singh and his office have arranged this workshop and offered an opportunity for open and bold discussions with faculty and staff. I feel more included by our university. Thank you!

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 9:06:52 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 9:08:56 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:04
IP Address: 207.47.175.160

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

To a degree. Certainly within the province and to an extent nationally. Still work to be done.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Find a way to connect all the work in this area as there is more than one College/School/unit working on it. Funding and infrastructure support are always needed.

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 9:59:23 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 10:08:07 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:43
IP Address: 142.165.115.194

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

The UofS has contributed greatly to Agriculture but I don't think we can consider our role as Pre-eminence in the area. In the signature area we speak to feeding the world but I don't think we have focused on the safety and sustainability aspect as well.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

To get to the next level I think we need a more collaborative type of outcome and this includes better linkage between departments but also with small businesses. We also need to have a more integrated and focused approach to address consumer safety concerns as well as address sustainability more head on. We are doing work in these areas but we need more focus and we need a better communication strategy so society sees it and can incorporate it more actively.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

I think we need a more deliberate focus on supporting cross discipline collaboration and linking directly with companies who will use the technology. We also need support to more actively address sustainability and safety.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

Thank you for holding this event, it gave me food for thought and will help me focus on the signature area more actively and see my role in that strategy.

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 3:55:23 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 4:01:14 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:51
IP Address: 64.110.216.231

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

UofS has a high profile nationally, but lags international leaders. Given the differences in scale between UofS and the largest universities in China and America, this is not surprising. It is clear that the UofS has had an impact on agriculture in Saskatchewan and across Canada.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Research areas are best served by having excellent faculty working together. Recruiting and retaining excellent faculty is absolutely key. Providing space, support and incentives for them to work together, should they choose to, is the next most important strategy. Nothing matters if you don't have enough great faculty to do the work.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

The narrative needs to change, emphasizing how excellent the faculty are, and not how clever administration was in picking this area. The UofS would have pre-eminence in this area whether it had a label or not because enough units hired excellent people and provided them with the time and space to do excellent things.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

Steve Sciliano's points were key, and should be the basis for any ongoing initiatives.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 8:29:55 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 8:34:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:03
IP Address: 70.64.20.16

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 Other (please specify):
Senior Scientist
What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**
To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**
To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?
Partly

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?
Bring the expertise together in a coherent way

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?
Consider climate change and sustainability as priority areas for addressing regional and national challenges and opportunities in agriculture

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

Good discussion, important and useful points raised for follow up

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 7:40:31 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 7:46:56 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:25
IP Address: 70.64.36.175

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

The area of agriculture has some level of international recognition, mostly for the history of the university as the first school of agriculture in the area.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

To increase marketing, and networking to let the world know the level of research that is done, that we are not only the home of the major agriculture school in the western prairies but the research done here is cutting edge.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

To support and motivate our faculty to engage interactionally.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

We all agree in the breakroom that we need more showcasing of all signature areas to let the world known who we are and what we do.

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 9:32:54 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 9:34:43 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:49
IP Address: 108.63.233.76

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4 **Respondent skipped this question**

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

I think we should strive to involve more faculty in large scale university grants. I believe we were doing a better job of this in the first phase of the P2IRC, and it fostered a lot of collaboration. It has becomes more isolated in the last several years however, and I believe this has been for the worse.

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 5:10:45 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 5:27:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:16:49
IP Address: 67.225.113.30

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Respondent skipped this question**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agricluture)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

According to who... The University community? The city? The Province? I don't believe it has when talking about the general public and the province as a whole.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Prioritizing helping the Province and not how we look Nationally or Globally. Programs that support the Producers here and help make our province strong. It's success will do the rest.

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Initially, as an employee who was not even aware there were Signature areas and then hearing about them, it made me feel like they were the only parts of the University that the University was proud of. I understand they are meant to be an umbrella and be inclusive of all related areas that fall under them... but it actually feels non inclusive of all aspects of campus

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

Thank you for inviting all to be apart of these talks and not just a few. It helps to make everyone feel involved and learn about the process.

#13

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, May 21, 2021 2:14:51 PM
Last Modified: Friday, May 21, 2021 2:25:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:10:34
IP Address: 128.233.10.141

Page 1: Instructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Strongly agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Agriculture)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the agriculture signature area? Why or why not?

Yes, I believe USask has achieved pre-eminence within Canada. As a next step, I think advancing our international reputation is important.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

I think that looking for ways to connect Agriculture to related high impact areas would take us to the next level, e.g. Agriculture in Climate Change (e.g., GHG sequestration), Agriculture in Medicine (e.g. medicinal plants), and Agriculture in Data Science (e.g. computational agriculture and plant breeding).

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

In the engagement discussions, a number of individuals described the signature areas with a filter metaphor, i.e. signature areas are used to filter out proposals/projects that do not fit within the topic areas. In my personal experience, as a Computer Science researcher who has undertaken a new research direction in Computational Agriculture since joining USask (whereas previously I worked in Computational Medicine), I found that the Agricultural signature area to be more like a magnet, i.e. as a mechanism to attract and create new local collaborations and accelerate/expand Agricultural research at USask.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Agriculture Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 3, 2021.

The engagement meeting was well organized.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 1:40:38 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 1:46:18 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:39
IP Address: 216.197.221.166

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Energy and Mineral Resources)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Energy and Mineral Resources signature area? Why or why not?

I do not think this area has been entirely successful. It is too broad and some components- in particular nuclear- have been missing entirely from the Energy side of the brief.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

I think the area could be split and that the profile of nuclear could be raised on the Energy side.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

In general these areas can only be successful if there is a bottom-up approach involving encouraging areas that already have faculty activity and hence buy-in. Simply declaring an area as a Signature Area and hoping that it will succeed is wishful thinking.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Energy and Mineral Resources Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 4, 2021.

This was a good discussion. I hope that the general idea of an enhanced focus on nuclear energy related technologies can be advanced, as part of the Energy file.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 1:44:02 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 1:48:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:23
IP Address: 108.60.172.145

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Energy and Mineral Resources)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Energy and Mineral Resources signature area? Why or why not?

I think it maybe did at one time, but it seems like there have been retirements from some key chairs/research positions.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Strategic investment in leadership/strategy and connections on campus

Strategic support for UG and Grad programming

Integrate social science (policy and law), including indigenous rights and development into programs and this signature area

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Help units/colleges make investments, as individual colleges have competing needs and can't always make investments that align with University priorities

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Energy and Mineral Resources Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 4, 2021.

one final question - was the NSERC Industrial Chair's program critical in the U of S having this as a strategic signature area? With the ending of that program, are there alternatives to resource faculty and research complements in this area?

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 1:59:55 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 2:06:29 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:34
IP Address: 142.165.195.116

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Energy and Mineral Resources)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Energy and Mineral Resources signature area? Why or why not?

It's not well defined and not well coordinated across narrow disciplinary activities. Faculty have not organically created interdisciplinary groups or proposals, nor have we shared networks and partnerships externally.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

We don't need another Centre or Global Institute, but we do need a convenor (or co-leads for the area). A faculty member (or ADR) who can regularly bring together faculty who are interested in defining which specific components of energy and mineral resources we have capacity and expertise in. We can't be everything, so what will be expert and leading in for this signature area?

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Look outside USask for ideas and partners. On April 16, 2021 the UofR announced a new Canadian Energy Transition Hub (<https://www.uregina.ca/external/communications/releases/current/nr-04162021.html>). Apparently no one at USask cares or notices. As a small province, we can't always compete with each other. We are too small to act big. But we can partner and collaborate to make a big impact in research.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Energy and Mineral Resources Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 4, 2021.

The meeting was a great first step in identifying key areas for developing pre-eminence. But if it's always about 1 person's niche area or interest, we will not become a world leader in either energy or mineral resources. We will continue to dilute excellence by segregation and vanity. We can be so much more, better, impactful. But we have to choose what we will be great at and what we have to stop (or not resource to the same degree).

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 2:15:34 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 2:20:13 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:38
IP Address: 174.2.24.182

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Energy and Mineral Resources)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Energy and Mineral Resources signature area? Why or why not?

No. Insufficient depth and breadth across multiple disciplines.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

We need to be attentive to multiple disciplines and perspectives, including community-engaged and critical researchers. I worry that with some of the signature areas and this one in particular our research is too closely aligned with industry and we lose the critical edge.

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Energy and Mineral Resources Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 4, 2021.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 4:06:07 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 04, 2021 4:13:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:00
IP Address: 70.64.12.115

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Energy and Mineral Resources)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Energy and Mineral Resources signature area? Why or why not?

Not yet - it is too broad to be significant; it lacks of a leadership in overseeing this signature area and advancing it; a strategy with clear goals is not set up to make it successful

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

- Identify the priorities of this area;
 - Designate a lead to oversee this area;
 - Build domestic and international strategic partnerships related to this area, government, funding agencies, academia and industries.
-

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Develop a strategy for success with clear goals

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Energy and Mineral Resources Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 4, 2021.

Thank you for arranging the workshop!

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 7:47:13 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 7:51:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:46
IP Address: 70.64.36.175

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Energy and Mineral Resources)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Energy and Mineral Resources signature area? Why or why not?

not as much as compared to other signature areas.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

by showcasing the research in international forums

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

same as above

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Energy and Mineral Resources Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 4, 2021.

might be a need to create a multi-institution group at the provincial level and national level to connect with other research centres whether universities or private sector to grow network and to work together.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 8:08:56 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 8:16:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:36
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Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Energy and Mineral Resources)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Energy and Mineral Resources signature area? Why or why not?

The focus on 'energy and mineral resources', without an emphasis on renewable energy, is outdated and out of step with the university's stated aims of taking climate action.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Revise this signature area for the 21st century, and be a leader in renewable energy; rather than continuing to invest in and support non-renewable energy research, such as that linked to the oil sands and potash.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

President Stoicheff signalled he wanted to lead transformative action on climate during his second term, and that this would be an 'inflection point' for how the university engaged in climate and sustainability issues. However, this action needs to go beyond the footprint of campus operations, to also extend to the types of research centres, chairs, and signature areas that are being prioritized and funded. Our on campus emission reductions are undermined if we continue to lag on prioritizing research on renewable energy sources, and instead continue to build non-renewable energy research.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Energy and Mineral Resources Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 4, 2021.

I was unable to attend the meeting, and so was glad to be able to provide comments in this format. Thank you.

Indigenous Peoples Signature Area Engagement

May 5, 2021

Session Notes

Have we achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? Why or why not?

- Working for Centre on Indigenous Scholarship – still a long way to go
 - Strong in some areas - Only starting to acknowledge Indigenous people at USask
 - Political leaders – First Nations and Metis people many social movements; First Nations bands are quite strong taken over public services
 - Social Capital quite strong
 - Weak in the University the area of the North – see Northerners involved and see Northerners as students and employed
 - Bus. Education – COVID gave us a step
 - Halted face to face research
 - Virtual presence in a real classroom
 - Only virtual classrooms – when we get back into things so we can continue – had more Indigenous students – lots more work
 - Lose the innovative ways of training and development in our communities.
 - Kavitha - We did not – we are getting there in terms of Indigenous Engagement – lots going on last 3 to 5 years – getting Indigenous Scholars for engagement; Community Engagement with Indigenous Peoples – long way to go; Land based healing; Suicide Prevention; Northern People – Health and Wellness; More responsibility to get all of these done in a strategic way; Mentoring and getting youth involved; Build more trust in youth and community; Background on Indigenous Peoples; Disheartening to see living conditions; What do we do as a university for betterment of life to promote health
 - Nick - A lot of research with human participation – improvements lots to work on too; Engagement with Indigenous communities quite well done, knowledgeable and considerate; Researchers responsibility to manage the relationship – still a lot of misconceptions about community engagement in the research community – could do a better job – help researchers understand – every community engage in its own way
 - Nnamdi - Area of community engagement; public health in the north opportunity with work with several researchers; at the end of the day have it be something helpful to the community; to help improve them; community agenda needs to inform academia; huge communities with huge needs; health caps, social issues, access to services; areas we should be focusing on; information on governance; First Nation information and overall data there has to be cognizance on OCAP principles
 - Erica - How are we measuring what tools are we using for pre eminence – research in terms of dollars and funding – focus on community impact – how are we working with the community what is the impact on the community and the impact that is happening we would be in a great spot; Bands have their own governance
 - Bonita - Engagement and scholarship; A toolkit that you can leave behind; Being accredited and trained; Bound in a lot of ways; Address honorariums; Lots of scholarly work but has it really impacted the community
 - Indigenous Peoples (USask Website)
 - Engagement and Scholarship
 - By 2050, half of Saskatchewan's population may be of Indigenous ancestry, a demographic shift that creates challenge and opportunity. Our shared journey will help advance Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of knowing and prepare a new generation of Indigenous youth for the global knowledge economy.
- [Aboriginal Education Research Centre](#)
[Native Law Centre](#)
- It actually blends thematic areas within Indigenous peoples research

- Goes into Indigenous communities – relevant to come out with that specific area
- All fit into this specific area of research.
- Vanessa - What are we doing to recruit Indigenous Graduate Students; Bring Indigenous people back to do the work in the communities
- JH: (pass – not enough experience/involvement with the university to date to speak knowledgeably to this question)
- HG: the need to adhere to OCAP and other protocols is being overlooked by the imperative to “follow the money.” People are getting involved in this signature area who might not be qualified or sufficiently trained/resourced to do so. People don’t have the time and/or willingness to engage with communities authentically. Something that is slow in coming is having communities identify areas in which they need work done. Spiritual processes and practices should not be involved in academia; there’s a “bastardization” of Indigenous culture taking place in academia. If we were really heeding TRC Calls to Action, we’d see many more Indigenous peoples in leadership roles in the university. There ought to be more concrete evidence in place if we were really achieving “pre-eminence” in this area.
- VP: More and more requests for contracts coming through for Elder services, but our contracts do not currently speak to the kind of services these knowledge-keepers provide, nor do they necessarily observe OCAP or culturally specific protocols. How can we make this process more culturally respectful?
- KC-D: Agreement with Holly (esp. re: spiritual practices that are being followed for today’s Buffalo Circle Welcoming Ceremony). There’s always room for improvement, of course. But whose definition of “achievement” are we considering here? I suppose I question the question itself.
- SM: Agrees with the questioning of the question. What does “pre-eminence” mean? People see opportunities for funding in this area and often follow the money, rather than ensuring that they or others have the training or resources they need.
- CW-L: Also struggled with the word “pre-eminence.” What if we answered this question instead, “Have we achieved authenticity in this signature area?” The language that we use is everything—*why*? When we get to the reason that is motivating us, then we can perhaps begin to engage authentically. Would like to see the university step back and really honour OCAP, come up with a community-led engagement process that is unique and authentic, and then sustain that process going forward (HG in chat: “authentic reciprocity”). What can we productively do together to have long-term sustainable relationships, rather than just one-offs. Let’s put faith back in people, not systems (via Maria Campbell).
- MH: How do we judge the “success” of research taking place in this signature area? Publications? Monographs? Community-engaged research?
- JW: Echoes many of the things already said. Grad students often want to undertake community-engaged research, but they need the leadership and guidance in place to be able to do so. Monetary and remunerative systems in the university often prevent researchers and community members from being able to engage authentically. There’s a lot of work to do yet, esp. in giving people the leadership and resources they need to do this work respectfully and knowledgeably.
- HG: “Authentic reciprocity” (Holly’s term!) perhaps a better term than “pre-eminence.” Having more Indigenous peoples in leadership roles. Taking cues from the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Unacceptable practices have no place in the academy (such as what’s taking place during the Buffalo Circle Welcoming Ceremony). What about employing Elders in a more permanent role. Most Elders live in community; their honoraria should not be taxed. We should be paying appropriately in a manner that does not affect their rights.
- CW-L: For Valerie—we’ve done lots of work with Connection Point to try to make it easier to remunerate Elders; we can probably tweak the improvements to take this process forward elsewhere. Elders must

remain free from the confines of the university in order to retain autonomy over their spiritual practices and knowledges.

- HG: deeply disappointed that Indigenous peoples have been subsumed under EDI; unique federal relationship with Canadian government is unlike other immigrants' and POC's relationships with the federal government and the state of Canada. It whitewashes Indigenous peoples and lumps them in with everyone else, which undoes a lot of the work of self-government, autonomy, self-directedness that Indigenous peoples have done over the last century and more.
- Dr. Airini: I'm puzzled that there isn't an Indigenous-focused committee within the tri-cameral governance arrangement. Indigenous knowledges and structures need to be built into the structures of RSAW, tenure/promotion, university-community contracts. We need the TRC, UNDRIP, MMIWG report, treaties, MOUs to help direct our activities on campus and beyond.
- Western Canada - indigenous awareness is much more obvious
- Larger centers - indigenous is always "out of the city" and on some reserve somewhere
- Rob - What other universities have initiatives of this magnitude; UofM obviously, but who else.
- Clinton - Yes, we are approaching pre-eminence in this area; Budget implications are allowing other universities to advance and hire
- Andrea - We'll never arrive at pre-eminence and shouldn't but strive to be better; Indigenous medicine is a key opportunity
- Yes and No – Saskatchewan is known as a University in Canada and to some extent internationally, as being a leader in this area.
- We have difficulties with 'ambiguity' – what do we mean by pre-eminence? Do we want to be a voice for this treaty area? Or do we want to be internationally recognized? Likely better at the former than the latter.
- We have some great researchers in Chairs and otherwise.
- There are successes – Law – Indigenous Law Centre, Chairs for Research, we have a strong success in our summer program and have student population in law that is representative (or higher) to the % of indigenous in our province; students are not just being admitted and being successful and thriving; we have made strides in research and community engagement.
- No – Theatre program (5/6 years ago) lack of support for it and lost a faculty member so it burnt out our faculty member but there was no funding or support (words where there but not resources to support it).
- Need more success from a student perspective; enrollments are low and not where we want to be; Gordon Oakes is trying, but the university can be a cold place for indigenous students (does not feel community based for these students).
- Our Treaty and land acknowledgment seems scripted – it would be great to be 'story' or into story format.
- It would be great to have a 'reverse' mentorship program, where the students/indigenous mentor us.
- Intention and words are there, but it is not 'who' we are – we do it because that is what we are supposed to do.
- Some of the measures we use in faculty productivity, the measurements have not changed – the metrics do not reflect supporting indigenous research and engagement (need a new model) and this impacts research productivity measurements. Additionally, faculty progression: what do internal grants and supports look like? Do we have them to support indigenous research and faculty? Do we have a '**genuine**' approach to supporting indigenous research and faculty?
- How do we measure success? What is the assessment?
- American Indian Networks for scholarship, CAUT, North American Indigenous Researchers – we have contributed to scholarship nationally and internationally (sorry I did not catch the appropriate names for

some of this scholarship, but the tenor was that we have a strong contingent of indigenous scholars contributing to scholarship nationally and internationally).

- New professors do not get any training on decolonization (nor training and support for existing faculty decolonization).
- To effect change at the structural level, we do not have coordination.
- In the Agriculture discussion the other day, there was no discussion about indigenous food security (and yet all things impact indigenous communities and people).
- How can we be serious in having an indigenous perspective in all signature areas? (food production, resource extraction, health and wellness, water) In research? In curriculum development?
- The indigenous signature area can be integrated into all aspects of the university (research, signature areas, employment).
- We segregate indigenization into one box, and it is a sidenote to other areas (signature areas and otherwise) and not just a small speck, but in large numbers.
- Research specifically – there are a lot of non-indigenous scholars doing research, but there is a lack of benefit to the indigenous community, and/or lack of relationship building with a community or group. So how do we do research with indigenous communities in respectful ways, particularly if you are not indigenous? How can we meet the community needs in our research and research relationships? Until we do, we cannot meet pre-eminence.
- To become pre-eminent, we need some Spanish or Portuguese speaking faculty in Indigenous studies as there is a lot going on in the Spanish/south and central American world. They are at the forefront of a lot going on in the sovereignty, food security issues – and we are missing out on a lot – particularly in the international sphere without a southern – Spanish/Portuguese speaking faculty influence.
- We have a history of the first Indian federated college, survival schools, foundational educational statements in indigenous education; we have a lot of community advocacy and indigenous wisdom outside the university.
- Tri-council funders have admitted that they need to do better at indigenization, and it is a good time to do something. Indigenous communities have the history and values - and our culture to support the weakest, so even if finances are tight at the university/government and colleges, we can learn from indigenous communities.
- Land acknowledgement and environmental justice are connected; not sure that people understand how connected these elements are.
- Fleur- Compared to the other signature areas, this one has been under-developed.
- Meika- Didn't even realize that this was a signature area. Poorly represented on the website.
- Jim- pre-eminence is a work in progress. It will take time to develop and coalesce. A number people on campus interested in connecting into issues and the community may not be aware of everything happening. Looking forward to gaining momentum and promoting this area.
- Alex- A lot of work being done through the collaboratorium. Engagement is often mentioned by professors. Interested in seeing different ways for students to be involved and attend. More support for students to be involved needed.
- Jerry- Much further advanced than what is going on at Dalhousie. Sheer number of people involved here speaks to this. We aren't up there nationally (UofA, Laval, Laurentian), but still known nationally for our work.
- Volker- VIOD is very interested in Indigenous research. Led a NCE call on vaccines in Indigenous and vulnerable communities. Interested in how this relates to emerging diseases and vaccine hesitancy.
- Shirley- The strategy or goal is missing. Without a measurement it is hard to know when pre-eminence is achieved. We have a large Indigenous population and though we have a long way to go, we are making progress. Indigenous should be intertwined with other signature areas. Would be good to see more development in this area.

- Jerry- do we do something in this area that nobody does? Do we offer something that no one else does? Maybe this is better than a more prescribed metric. Build on what no one else is doing.
- Meika- We will be launching Indigenous strategy for USask (hopefully this fall). This will be tied in with IPA metrics that will mirror what is happening with OTC. Might be an opportunity for signature area.
- Alex- should work with Indigenous studies students first (e.g. portal is very underdeveloped compared to library). Should expand research into other relevant topics. Focus on areas where other research isn't being done and expand into this direction.
- Question 1 is a double-edged sword of a question
- Researchers without background or interest without the training a growing concern in this area
- Not adequate training for people to have training in doing research in respectful ways
- Ethical space not there for successful engagement
 - Western research has a more helicopter approach that does not translate well to Indigenous research
 - Concept of relationships not strong enough in the academy today
 - We don't let communities decide research focus
 - Too much focus on spiritual ceremonial practices – this is an emerging concern
 - No place for this in academia
 - Fetishism of culture
- Contracts do not speak to elder services, and don't follow OCAP
- People not paid successfully or in a timely way
- How do we make this process more respectful?
- University achieving pre-eminence – we are not there yet
- room for improvement, to build relationships
- I struggle with the word pre-eminence. Is authenticity a better word for what we see?
- Be mindful of what we hope to do
- The language we use is everything
- Graduate students want to do community-driven research but can't, unless the supervisor has relationships and can make an introduction, and even then, this is not ideal
- Relationships take a long time
- I think a lot about critical humility
- How to engage authentically, with authentic reciprocity
- As junior faculty, torn between career expectations and feeling not ready to do this work that is authentic
- Pandemic has accelerated this challenge
- Pre-tenure apprenticeship not enough time to build community connections
- What is achievement, what is pre-eminence
- I think in some ways we have; we're known for working in the Indigenous space and key people, key research areas, doing some incredibly work in programming, compared to other Us in Canada we're considered to be a leader, particularly in the health space (CIHR network). Fed govt is seeing more and more that the work we're doing here can be pretty illuminating, there's more we could and should be doing but we're on a good road.
- I feel like there has been some really great work done by our Indigenous Scholars at the U of S, but I also know there are barriers that our scholars have faced in the past, and many of them have recently left the university. So, I do have concerns that Indigenous researchers are not being adequately supported.
- My previous role when in the OVPR was in the CFI and CRC areas and with both of those there was a requirement of program for institutions and how it tied into signature areas, from back then to now, we had a few scholars and there wasn't a whole lot to say institutionally, from that perspective that there have been changes on campus, a change in the amount of things

- There has been really great progress but there are barriers that remain in place, the number of scholars who are leaving is concerning and one of the reasons they're leaving is because they don't feel supported and we need to keep improving
 - Another issue is that there's recognition inherent challenges of work with indigenous people, its difficult to communicate how long it takes to build community engagement, it's a process that takes time, and for those who are on the tenure clock it can be really scary
- Support for building relationships is not really accounted for in the tenure process and there's no way you can build those relationships without it taking time, there are ongoing mentorship courses in the activities we're involved in, but it would be nice if there was a person who could help navigate the engagement
- Really like the point of difficulty of dealing with the tenure clock, deliberately waited until I had tenure until getting into this area because of the inherent difficulty of the time labs, developing relationships in Nunavut took 3 years and if my tenure had been on the line in the time, I would have chucked the project until a later time
- Another problem I've encountered is how anyone that evaluates the quality my interacting with indigenous groups, they have to assess that quality but its such a nebulous thing, I was in one day-long meeting with an indigenous partner, and during the socializing period, one of the people who had been central to the meeting, assumed that I was an MD, how do you take output from interactions like that, how do you assess the quality of the meeting, have to use the relationships to move the agenda forward and how do other people assess the quality
 - It's hard to relate that into written work like for grants, its hard to have the same 'academic feel' that a reviewer can understand
 - Working with a few new junior faculty and the college of dentistry is trying to find a way to recognise the diff pubs and the community engagement their doing in comparison to traditional academic measures
 - Reviewers do not understand or lend as much to indigenous ways of knowing
- Working with the ethics office, REB, have a lot of their questions (not criticisms) but required a lot of clarity to help process the application
- Is there an indigenous research community on campus or is it dependent on specific groups or areas?
 - Wish there was a body to better support indigenous research
- Two areas to barriers, ethics is one, but one challenge is that, where we are located in treaty 6 territory, so the lens that the REB looks at it is through Cree lens, which is relevant right here but not relevant for other areas (Northern or to the west), it's another time consuming step – use improvement
 - Amount of time it takes to get anything going, grant cycles are short, you get 2 years for a grant, you have half your time spent to ethics, grant cycles are not conducive to the research that communities want to see which is deep and long
- MK: - Excellence is more important than pre-eminence but we have made excellent progress with partnerships.
- AK: Is question correct? need to define excellence. It should be grounded in community and their input to success is pivotal. We are well on our way for international recognition.
- MF: define pre-eminence very important, is it staff and faculty? research out-put?, \$ values of grants? Societal impact very important. Can think of good examples but how are they coming together. How does this signature area relate within the matrix of the other signature area, it is NOT a single silo area?
- BH; lot of strength with indigenous health but we are lacking in other area such as indigenous thought, indigenous philosophy. Missing essence of an indigenous signature area. Need to bring together international networks. Concern about indigenous scholars leaving because of lack of support at administration level, Can do more, concerns that we have not moved this forwards

- We are seen and recognized as leaders, particularly in the Health sector, with an institute and primarily with CIHR;
- Some research programs secured over 2.5M in funding;
- CRC, CFI;
- We have recognized Indigenous Health Researchers – leading this area of research;
- Leading faculty in this signature area are leaving (recruited by other institutes and lack of support here at USask, feels this trend will continue);
- Changes to funding that can support this signature area are lacking;
- Challenges to working with the community include the length of time to build a relationship will affect tenure or vis versa...faculty will only work with a community after tenured;
- Lack of financial support for faculty when working on building relationships with a community – this funding is not provided by the granting agencies;
- No merits for faculty to measure a successful relationship with the community;
- Time is essential for publications and there is no support;
- Ethics is time consuming and not always in a position to understand the concepts of the research methods;
- There is no Indigenous Research Support Group for faculty to currently meet and discuss their work or facilitate work with communities;
- Centric to Treaty 6 territory;
- Grant cycles are rigid and short, less likely to succeed with Indigenous Research;
- The number of Indigenous-led and Indigenous faculty led research is not being promoted enough;
- Grant reviewers are not knowledgeable in reviewing the grants and are not able to support the development
- *Take away – the forecast is Indigenous populations are increasing the province and we need to improve this signature area to make sure we are meeting the needs and there are lots of areas that can be improved*
- Some remarked that as a signature area it is too broad compared with other signature areas
- General agreement that there has been strides in making it a signature area but concerns about online visibility
- One individual defined pre-eminence as relationship building, another as superiority
- ‘Co-creation’ curriculum of Indigenous subjects throughout classes rather than a singular mandatory course
- Some took issue with concept of aiming for ‘pre-eminence’ of trying to be the supreme in the area overall
 - Considerable nuance given that government funding is affected by being ‘first’ or not
 - Also does not align with some Indigenous methodologies like relational circles since those do not have hierarchies but signature areas more or less do
- Trying to hire the best talent for Indigenous Health, Alex and Malcolm King, Cameco research chair, Caroline Tait, and many in allied colleges, strengths in CIHR institute, Carrie Bourassa, need more interactions within colleges, and interconnections between colleges to forge links, and also with communities, with Metis and all Indigenous people
- College of medicine we have made some advances but we can do more.
- New staff faculty not as familiar with what is happening.
- Some areas need improvement, esp, with policies, increase community engagement, and with remuneration, all need to support community perspective and the way things are done.
- Working with elders, policy needs to meet their needs.
- In college of Engineering, community health, policies, all impacted by engineering, building design, engagements, all has an impact. And reverse of it, the policy, needs relationship with engineers, we must be more interactive and engaged and partnerships, so important., we have a centennial chair community engaged design, esp in water, very hopeful for the CRC a social scientist in engineering, will be a leap, but this kind of thinking is needed, we need more cohesiveness, larger umbrella,

- Connect researchers from different areas, to elevate all and focus on human relationships.

How might we strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the “next level”?

- Audrey - All targets to meet to be tenures; Establishing relationships is the base work to get started; Affect their tenure; Sr. leadership somehow make a special consideration for people identified as Indigenous Researchers; Don't want to lose the faculty that have the ability to build these relationships
- Nnamdi - Measurable indicators for signature areas; In line with Indigenous ways
- Erica - Actual impact from the community; How has that work actually improved the community; Focus on the change in the community; Acknowledged in research area
- Bonita - Living document that they can recognize and do; Sometimes incorporates community based training and hiring grad /undergrad students; Training path for undergrad and grad students for what they want to do
- Terry - We need to be multi-disciplinary; Indigenous peoples could assist us in designing better communities; Western Canada has been colonized, much of what we do and how we design things is heavily impacted by Eastern Canada and Europe
- *People born in Western Canada and the indigenous peoples that were here are all subject to people from Eastern Canada that come here and tell us how to do things because “they know better and we’re just prairie folk”. I suspect people in Ontario and Quebec are subject to England and France telling them how to do things because the Canadians are “uncultured colonists”. We need to get out of this cycle and take control of what it is to make Western Canada unique and strong. We must work together with all peoples. Indigenous peoples have been here much longer than us and we need to listen to them as together we can envision and design what our prairie society could and should look like in the future. Regardless of how we got here, we’re all in this together. This is in all areas including resource development, community development, medicine, agriculture, etc.*
- Tim - Plant sciences and medicine could work much more with indigenous partner to the betterment of medicine
- Jennifer - Positive steps but what does pre-eminence look like; How do we know when we get there?
- Terry - Need to get past "not on us without us" and not do research "on" indigenous peoples but as a team to move our society and province forward
- Tim - we need support centrally to work inclusively
- Clint - Ownership of research data (with a peoples that view ownership as a collective); We have a resourcing problem that is keeping us from pre-eminence; Need to get interdisciplinary people at the same table (even within the USask research community)
- Tim - Perhaps a CREATE grant in this area that trains indigenous peoples
- *There would be significant value in getting people involved in research in various areas from all disciplines. Researchers from many disciplines don't know what each other are doing but there are synergies. “3 minute research presentation” sessions would open doors for collaboration*
- *Many challenges we find in any community are linked to how we design, develop and manage these communities. Water quality can often be traced back to cultural norms of not putting chemical in water and indigenous elders teaching that rivers are a vein of mother earth and water is a life giving force. Psychological and medical problems can be impacted by the way communities are developed that provide housing that break up family units (generationally) or aligns houses that contribute to negative social issues. “Healthy Communities” must take a multi-disciplinary approach. Indigenous peoples could likely teach our urban designers how to design healthier communities.*
- Defining what we mean be pre-eminence:
 - student enrolment, retention, success, and employment
 - faculty recruitment, retention, and support

- metrics for success for faculty (research, engagement etc.).
- Research – locally (treaty 6), Saskatchewan, Canada or internationally?
- Leadership at the Senior level for this Signature area (Provost? VP Research?)
- Taking time to genuinely **on-board** our students and faculty and staff
- How do we support our students experiencing trauma? Food insecurity, housing insecurity – cannot have learning if people are hungry or homeless.
- Integration of the Indigenous peoples’ signature area into all our signature areas.
- There is money/funding out there that the U of S could obtain, but governments, corporations would be willing to invest in the right kinds of things in this space and the U of S is not taking advantage of this. Need attention brought to this and strategic and coordinated approaches to attracting these funding sources.
- Meika- Increasing communication. Campus and more broadly to the external community.
- Volker- Allocation of resources. E.g. Research chairs, research funding, priority setting. USask needs to commit resources- personnel, students, trainees, funding of research, admin support, etc. Signature area means we’ve identified this as an area of strength and we need to devote resources to further strengthen.
- Shirley- Identify a lead or leaders in this area. Who will bring people together?
- Volker- Had something like this for the One Health signature area. Needs to be a leadership team for each area that can provide direction and strategic oversight. Not restrictive but can bring groups together to achieve something greater (synergistic).
- Shirley- strategic partners both internally and externally?
- Fleur- there are MoUs but how these are actualized and what activities come from this remain unknown.
- Jerry- Need a fairly precise goal. Something big. Led by the TRC. Should address the #16 to establish a degree program in Cree or other Indigenous language. This should be a priority. A program led by tenured professors similar to what you find in a Canadian French language department.
- Jim- Language is not always inclusive enough of Indigenous issues outside of Canada. A recognition of Indigenous practices and customs is global. Would like this to be improved upon as we work to be the “university the world needs”. Be more inclusive of all communities. Recognize differences across the Indigenous contexts (e.g. ethics). There are 330M Indigenous people across the world.
- If this really was a signature area, we would have far more Indigenous people in leadership (no Deans, etc.)
- Things are not changing
- If there was success, there would be far more to say
- When we get to an authentic reason, we can move forward in a good way
 - Then we can have proper cultural consulting/engagement
 - Would like to see the university honour TRC, OCAP and have this conversation with a community-led engagement process
 - Go through a process of true consultation that is a lived experience of the community and university
 - The university needs to take some time and create a process that people can feel good about
 - I have a lot of empathy for people who are new in this arena
- Systems that are set up around paying people cumbersome – not conducive to research
- We so often have to ask for forgiveness rather than permission because of institutional failures
- Institution puts up barriers to authentic engagement, authentic reciprocity
- Lots of work still left to do
- We need to be better at storytelling the work that’s happening here, an opportunity that we can’t let go, there needs to be more conversation about the work that’s being done
- Its about relationships and relationship building and the stories need to be about that and about the people and how its making a difference – going further from just announcements
- Having one place on campus that could take lead on facilitating researchers

- MK Macro level need to develop a Indigenous Research Centre would be an advance, needs to be a physical centre rather than virtual. Where community feel welcome on a more even footing rather gathering on University territory. Micro level time and resources to get things going is required.
- BH there is strong mentorship on campus that requires nurturing, Need to engage community especially since 'bad' research has broken relationships. Not an English River centre, require an 'evergreen' focus that provides growth. Need \$\$ investment. Also what is the accountability of University if this signature area does not move forwards?
- AK – Need a centre, recognise different ways of knowing and doing, and recognise the importance of the lands i.e. get out of University building use difference space and mind. Community do not want academics as interface, they wish to connect with indigenous communicate and lead, university partners facilitates
- CD Struggle with academic timelines and metrics required by university, academic timelines hold back development. Community relationships take time. EDI plan that has come out and indigenous ways of knowing need to be incorporated more. Settlers need to better understand and take on board incorporating EDI into research plans
- Needs to be able to tell the story of our relations with the Indigenous community better through storytelling, moving away from the academic basis, can be inclusive of language and perspectives of the community (story is best told by the community);
- A single area for resources, information and the signature area content needs to be revised/improved
- *Take away: the community and the researchers are the story and we need this to be central to the message and how it is represented in the signature area – the lens needs to shift*
- Some expressed concern that online/user friendly visibility about the signature areas is poor
- Back and forth dialogue about identifying Indigenous researchers in newsletters/emails/more webpages → however some may not want to be identified and would simply want to do be for example an Indigenous researcher who focuses on engineering without their identity becoming involved
 - For individuals interested, maybe create automatic emails of what Indigenous researchers are up to for other staff
- A medical school researcher expressed lack of information and connections on how to find Indigenous research networks even when funding is not an issue
- A land-based space for Indigenous research
- Someone expressed a grievance of Indigenous and other people of colour researchers being called to do extra work concerning race – University should try to alleviate this extra burden
- Research ethics and Indigenous ethics are not one in the same so producing Indigenous research has additional ethical concerns beyond formal ethical confines
 - The importance of careful and respectful academic work
- Trauma-informed research especially its manifestation in socioeconomic concerns like poverty and lack of childcare's impact on obtaining research/academic opportunities
- We need to retain, and recruit more indigenous scholars,
- Introducing more indigenous protocols and ceremonies, instead of MOU, we did pipe ceremonies, and instead of western protocols and policies we need to engage elders Knowledge Keepers, in going forward
- More land-based initiatives, all programs need to get out onto the land with guidance from Elder and Knowledge Keepers
- Retention is important, nurturing students who move thru the system need to be retained.

- The atmosphere is toxic on the ground at the university, about indigenization and incorporating indigenous world views.
- Support for students so they do not fall, but focus on Indigenous engagements strategy, but maintain and holding relationships, is important, once you serve your service, do not push people out the door.
- Don't create barriers move past the very inclusion and engagement, not just visible aspects of culture, look at the ways in which FNMI engage and need real discussion about diversity, and not just a sweat, or a sharing circle, this is not Indigenous engagement.
- Retention is huge, there are many job offers for Indigenous faculty, need to be plans to help people stay, all of our relations need to be supported.
- Leadership needs to step in, and to support Ind faculty, to keep students as well. This is a big area that we need to build.
- Sometimes the environment is an issue, there is a lack of critical mass, lack of intersectional support with so much demand on the few Ind people in the system
- How do we support people to stay and to keep going to support their research? Many pronged approaches.
- Need to build the sense of community
- In general, people leave either because they are unhappy, or greater opportunity, and for family, but the u of s, has a retention policy that needs to be updated, this needs to be upgraded, and a pathway for Indigenous scholars, there is something clearly going on, we need concrete steps, creating a new stream,
- With covid, it creates new challenges, some of us have not been to our offices yet, Ind faculty new to build and connect to community, need to do this, a forum to bring the Indigenous community together, in a good way.
- Apply an equity lens as opposed to equality, need to consider unique challenges that Indigenous faculty face, ie Indigenous professionals in the college of dentistry, need to have these discussions.

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding USask's signature areas?

- Andrea - Decolonizing the web site
- Tim - Could inclusive mean several languages on the web site
- Who is in charge and what do they want at the senior leadership level? It is not clear.
- Who has my back as indigenous faculty? The support is not there or not always clear what is there. We have lost some 'rockstar' indigenous faculty (Tasha Hubbard, Sarah Nichols). Our lack of retention is apparent, but it is very difficult to have that discussion with senior administrators.
- Someone has to say – in senior leadership – “I am in charge of this signature area and the buck stops with me.” We just do not have a leadership identified.
- We have financial constraints, but we all have been taxed equally – but if we are talking about equity, equity cannot mean equal with all the claw backs. Indigenous studies has been clawed back the same as others on campus – without a view to equity and demand.
- Transparency of University budgets might be important (there is an ad hoc committee)
- Students are ready. All students (young white kids) are filling our classes to capacity. There is a real thirst for knowledge from indigenous and non-indigenous students.
- Environmental justice and indigenous people are going to front line on this, and there is an opportunity for us to support our students and research areas. We also have a lot of international students that are seeking to engage in research in this subject-area and they may not be seeing or experiencing as much as we are promoting.

- U of S has branded as indigenous -centric space and we must be careful if we are not delivering on the brand.
- Covered much of this throughout.
- develop themes that cross boundaries.
- Jim- want to emphasize that SK and prairies and Canada is where weighting should be, but just want to raise awareness that there is more to the conversation
- increased Indigenous presence on campus necessary
- By whose definition are we pre-eminent – I question the question
- There is a lot of learning that Indigenous people go through when they come to the university – non-Indigenous people should do this too
- Maria Campbell: “I have no faith in systems, but I have faith in people”
- Give support to people to do things in an acceptable way, but also get out of the way so that there can be more people in leadership roles
- Continue having this as a signature area, there’s a lot of opportunity here, the U can work so closely with indigenous communities
- In the foreseeable future SK is going to be majority indigenous, if we don’t have a signature area in the group that will be the majority population of our province
- Stronger emphasis on community based research
- What we don’t want is researchers helicoptering in – we don’t want that – we focus on relationship building, supporting indigenous scholars, supporting community connections, needs more support
 - Doesn’t have to be financial, this can be moral support and connections on campus
- I think the university needs to build a mentorship network for young Indigenous scholars; training for non-Indigenous support resources (like myself) to better support Indigenous scholars, and overall value recognition for those community-based research projects
- Pots of funding for travel to communities for relationship building
- MENTORSHIP PROGRAM – needs a lot of strengthening and senior leadership needs to invest in this and there’s a U leader
- DF – relationships in student recruitment is very important as is involving the local communities. For example, how do satellite campuses engage local communities. How will we build relationship with international communities?
- AK – What does ethical research and relationships mean? Process focus is very important. Honor indigenous ways of doing things. Research teams need to be nurtured holistically and importa to develop how they think.
- VS aligning academic programs being offered with their success is important
- BH – Knowledge capacity is already on campus and but we look outwards rather than germinating our own people, Importance of mentorship network funding moving from the national level support to local university support. Accountability of supporting local initiatives that have been federal fund but need to be continued, where is the support to ensure these local initiatives continue. We can’t afford for indigenous researchers to continue to leave the institution, where are the retention strategies.
- MF how do we continue to nurture what we have?
- Emphasis should be on research that is community based – NO helicopter research projects;
- Better support for scholars;
- Invest/support the relationship with the community;
- Better supports for the community to be involved in research;
- Build a mentorship network for young Indigenous scholars;
- Training opportunities for non-Indigenous support resources to better support Indigenous scholars,

- Recognition of those existing community-based research projects
- *Take away: The signature area should provide support can be moral support or invest in resources and opportunities that makes everyone able to contribute various levels of support*
- We need to discuss this in view of the budget, and the signature areas.
- When you bring in new faculty, we need welcoming ceremonies, when covid is done, there needs to be a ceremony to introduce new faculty, or departing faculty, need to maintain those relationships, with grants, projects, lines of communications, this needs to be remembered and administration needs to put energy towards this.
- Approaching from an equity lens is a struggle to get across to people and to achieve, but it needs to be the goal.
- Community, esp. for Indigenous students, and how does this connect to faculty and staff, whether in person or remotely, esp. for sense of belonging, and retaining students.
- Branching out the community, and understand what the relationships are with other institutions, this is something to also look at and to nurture.
- A lot of Indigenous students are actually caught in the systems that folds are researching, as a part of their academic careers, are we students or are we living it, and are we subjects, or collaborators, as we contribute with our work and our studies, many of us feel caught.
- We need to engage settler and new commers students, i.e. take land acknowledgment into action, and all the ongoing issues of colonialism
- Need more education on the land that we are on. We need to take students all out onto the land.
- We also need more indigenous people in leadership positions to guide inclusive equity policies going forward.

General Discussion

- We do not like the word pre-eminence. Authentic reciprocity is not a western term and would align with TLC
- It is necessary to have Indigenous people in leadership
- No matter how much training non-Indigenous people have, they can never fill the role of Indigenous Peoples
- Sacred seven grandfather teachings
- Hr could integrate these ideas
- We should have permanent positions for elders
- Would probably save money and would respect their time
- We have come a long way, but there is so far to go
- Remove pre-eminence – it is a western term
- We need to pay appropriately in a way that doesn't affect people's pension. Seems like a really easy fix
- Tax session possible for elders
- I am deeply disappointed that Indigenous peoples subsumed under EDI
- Not appropriate
- EDI whitewashes the trauma Indigenous People have experienced
- Why can't we be leaders
- Why are we following what everyone else is doing in EDI
- EDI a huge step back
- It does not help atone for the horrors of the Canadian government's treatment of Indigenous Peoples
- Very disturbing
- I'm puzzled that there is not an Indigenous-focused committee on council

- Keen to be part of making apparent in our structure, recruitment, tenure and promote, and research – see more Indigenous faculty, staff, students come in

Other

- Indigenous signature area: How are we doing?
 - We first need to determine how we are going to measure what we are doing well? What are the markers of success? There has not really been tracking of the success or lack of success of of this signature area.
 - Some markers might include the number of CRCs held by Indigenous people, graduate training opportunities specific to Indigenous health, recruitment and retention of students and faculty
 - Is the signature area making an impact for the people who care about the impact of that area? There are ways this could be measured in terms of research impact
- Internationally, we definitely have more work to do. We have potential to expand (high interest) but there does not seem to be supported avenues to expand internationally.
- Recruitment and retention of Indigenous faculty is an enormous problem. We need to create CRC in Indigenous research across signature areas and within this signature area. Include input from Indigenous faculty and community partners about what areas to prioritize. Approach Indigenous faculty to gauge their desire to stay at the university and what support they need to remain at the UofS.
- UofS is the only institution that had recruitment and retention plans for Indigenous librarians. Only institution with sabbatical for Indigenous librarians but research isn't supported. Research program could be supported more, having more time to apply for research grants. Workload is too heavy and does not feel supported in other areas of work. Do not get credit within the library for work that is done by Indigenous faculty. Work is being supported and recognized externally to the University, but not internally.
- What diversity matters? Who is included and excluded? Under tone baked into the culture of the university that Indigenous people are inferior, this defines how we are engaged. Anti-racism strategy is very important across UofS.
- Optimistic and hopeful about new senior leadership. New approach to the signature areas that hopefully filters down into research undertakes at UofS.
- Need for more Indigenous leaders in senior administrative positions
- Lots of questions about the signature area and why it has not been developed more. Moving forward this has to be a full-fledged signature area and not an afterthought.
- Lack of coordination and people working together across signature areas, across colleges etc. Should be clear that we are working together and not competing. We need a lead for the Indigenous signature area. Other signature areas have leaders but the Indigenous signature there has been no leader. We need someone designated as the leader who can work with other signatures areas and across colleges.

- Lack of coordination where community partners are left out of important decisions. All proposals should come through a leadership body that would assist to bring community stakeholders together.
- We need a strategy and clear goals, values etc. about what can be done. We should be developed in many areas related to Indigenous peoples and be leaders in the country and internationally.
- In most signature areas there is an industry focus or partner, and there isn't a logical industry partner in this area; Indigenous students and faculty not engaged in a way they could have been to link into this other work
- Missed opportunity for collaboration between Indigenous faculty/research and other signature areas where we have leading Indigenous researchers working in related/same fields.
- Relationship with Indigenous communities and the need for the signature area to reflect community priorities
- Need for Indigenous partners/faculty to be brought into projects at much earlier stages than is often occurring; a need for researchers to learn the basics of what research with communities, community partners entails (especially regarding data sovereignty) so that Indigenous faculty aren't responsible for educating the University or remedying relationships because of missteps.

#1

COMPLETE

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Time Spent: 00:01:27
IP Address: 216.197.130.106

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1

Staff

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2

Agree

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3

Agree

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Respondent skipped this question

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

Would have liked a 15 minute presentation by a senior leader about the signature area to kick off the meeting. I did not know what the format would be fully roundtables

Excellent opportunity thank you

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 12:32:19 PM
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Time Spent: 00:05:22
IP Address: 108.60.172.145

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

I think there is some confusion in what we mean by this. Is it in research on and with indigenous communities and people? Or it is about increasing the number of indigenous faculty? Or it is about increasing and retaining and supporting success of indigenous students?

I am not exactly sure what we want to achieve. If it is all these things, we might want to be clear what is research pre-eminence and what are others aspects of the indigenization agenda that we are hoping to achieve.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Indigenous perspectives and research in each of the signature areas.

Better on-boarding for all faculty, students and staff at the U of S about indigenization (from why we do the land acknowledgement to historical relationship, to what we can learn to apply in all our processes and interactions.)

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

I was hearing that we need a senior leader to take this on. It might be the OVPR, or it might be the Provost. Likely it is both - as the faculty recruitment and retention, as well as the student recruitment, retention and success falls to the Provost and the Research agenda to the OVPR.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 12:33:50 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 06, 2021 12:57:45 PM
Time Spent: 00:23:54
IP Address: 128.233.11.22

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

Comparing to when I started at the University of Saskatchewan in 2011, I continue to see growth in the collective engagement with Indigenous people in research. As a recent recipient of a large CIHR grant where I am collaborating with Indigenous scholars and communities I feel that I was able to do so because of the networking across USask colleges. However, more work needs to be done to support multidisciplinary team engagement.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Usask must recognize the relationship building effort that scholars who engage with Indigenous communities put towards learning and developing sound relationships. Most scholars end up deferring their engagement with Indigenous people to first achieve tenure before they embark on this journey. This is because there is no recognition of the important role of developing relationships that go hand-in-glove with this type of community-based collaboration.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Having workshops to support scholars engaged in Indigenous research including mentorship is very important. Without the mentors I have engaged with in my journey I will not have made it this far in my career. Unfortunately, standards for tenure do not build this aspect of mentorship or developing relationships in community-based health as important.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

Balancing life and work in academia can be very difficult especially during this time of Covid19. As such it is not always feasible to attend important engagement sessions in the Indigenous engagement signature area. I benefitted a lot from attending the May 5th forum. I felt that I was not alone. Hearing from the experiences of other scholars engaged in community-based research and learning that we share common challenges and we were blessed to work with perceptive mentors in our scholarly journey is encouraging. .

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 12:32:38 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 06, 2021 1:02:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:29:30
IP Address: 70.64.12.115

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

Yes - University has developed units and programs in recognizing and highlighting Indigenous Peoples.

No - No matrix and clear plan on achieving success

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

A leadership team not to manage the area but to better support the research in this area, such as funding, personnel and coordination.

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

We had a dynamic and great conversation. Thank you for organizing this session and I appreciated the open discussions.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 1:54:17 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 06, 2021 1:58:30 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:12
IP Address: 207.47.198.129

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 Other (please specify):
Research Manager
What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 Respondent skipped this question
To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 Disagree
To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?
not yet, there is potential but the will is not there. Still just talking the talk and not walking the walk. need to work at creating a sense of community, and to let the Indigenous faculty and students and Indigenous community drive how this looks and how it works, nothing about us without us

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?
Indigenous student and faculty Recruitment and retention strategy. wouldnt it be great if the U of S was know as the go to post-secondary institute for anything and everything Indigenous esp Indigenous research, if we do not do this, or aim or move towards, then some other institution will

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

listen more, not just with your ears, but your heart, and all 33 senses...

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

thanks for hosting this, this could be done a couple times a year.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 2:02:01 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 06, 2021 2:15:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:13:51
IP Address: 216.197.221.204

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

no:
- there has been no central focus nor pillars nor articulated measures of success.
-we have individual pockets of excellence but not in a coherent and articulated way.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

-leadership
-focus
-attention to anti-racism training, education, practices
-OCAp training for all and a deep understanding of how that will revolutionize the structures, processes and philosophies that underpin the university
-a practical unpacking of what reconciliation means: on a local level, unit level, organizational level
- a real sense of humility and not claiming too much space in this area that isn't ours to claim.
-a strong commitment to how

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

we need more time together. Longer time for these sessions. To truly develop the area more fully, we need to do this together.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 3:23:38 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 06, 2021 3:28:53 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:15
IP Address: 104.246.161.198

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 Other (please specify):
Research facilitator
What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Strongly disagree**
To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly disagree**
To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?
I don't know what pre-eminence means with regard to this signature area. Define it and I will tell you if you have reached it.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?
Communication on the area. Helping researchers gain access to indigenous networks. Identifying who is currently working in this area and Who the leaders are. Were the leaders at the meeting?

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?
I would like to see a single hub for indigenous work. I struggle to build networks in this area and this is well known. A central hub will allow communities to tell us what their problems are and we work with them on solutions.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 2:40:12 PM
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IP Address: 174.2.26.80

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

If you look at the website, it doesn't tell you much about all of the amazing Indigenous research going on at USask. So, communication and consolidation needs to occur there.

I also reject the notion that we should be seeking pre-eminence as the goal. This is counter to Indigenous ways of knowing that seek good quality of relationships, working in a good way, and humble ways of being.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Inviting more Indigenous people into conversations about this signature area.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Indigenization should be woven through all of the signature areas as it is in the weave of the UPlan.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

There was not enough time dedicated for this event. We barely scratched the surface in our smaller group discussions.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 12:45:19 PM
Last Modified: Friday, May 07, 2021 8:46:26 AM
Time Spent: 20:01:07
IP Address: 70.64.36.175

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

Not as much as we should have based on the importance and size of the current indigenous communities in the province.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Recruitment and retention of indigenous faculty

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

More funding and resources are needed and hiring of more indigenous leaders in senior positions such Jackie O. are highly needed.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

Signature areas need to have a representative of operational unit to facilitate communications and connection within university and internationally

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 10, 2021 7:23:39 AM
Last Modified: Monday, May 10, 2021 7:27:37 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:57
IP Address: 174.2.5.116

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

Mixed progress.

Q5 **Respondent skipped this question**

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Please engage in smaller, more focused meetings with those with appropriate expertise.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

There needs to be a better environment created at these meetings. There is one or two Indigenous researchers who dominate. They are particularly negative and focused on their own agenda - essentially to get more resources for themselves. It's hard for others to speak or be solutions-oriented. Perhaps they should be sent to one room together during break-up session?

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 11:40:44 AM
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Time Spent: 00:05:27
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Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

While it is true we have many indigenous faculty and researchers, there doesn't really seem to be a signature angle or approach to research in Indigenous issues, communities, challenges, etc. Notably, the Department of Indigenous Studies is a VERY small department, and many faculty leave that department over the years. I begin to question why this is the case, and why this area is not a priority such as at the University of Alberta where Indigenous Studies has its own faculty, equivalent to its own college as we would know it here.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

More funding and more faculty for areas like Indigenous Studies. Perhaps allocated directly to them and not funnelled through the college of a&s as it seems that may be the issue.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Words are nice, but money talks and brings the actual eminence.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

I was not able to attend, but my responses are the thoughts that I had on the topic.

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 20, 2021 11:53:36 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 20, 2021 11:56:21 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:44
IP Address: 174.2.24.182

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly agree**

To what extent do you believe that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Indigenous Peoples)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Indigenous Peoples signature area? Why or why not?

We have maintained a critical number of faculty across a range of units with interest and expertise.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Continue to recruit and retain Indigenous scholars and other experts. Provide mechanisms to bring interested scholars together and break down boundaries between disciplines and perspectives.

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 5, 2021.

It was ironic that a number of people left for the Buffalo Circle meeting. I guess my invitation got lost in the mail? It highlighted the impression that there are "ins" and "outs" working inn this area. It made me feel like my expertise and allyship has not been recognized and valued. I realize this is not the fault of the organizers of this meeting but the timing was quite unfortunate.

Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area Engagement

May 6, 2021

Breakout Room Summary

Have we achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? Why or why not?

-close to pre-eminence. Who else has a light source in Canada?

-but it's a national facility, and we need to keep that in perspective. Other universities have pre-eminence/leadership there.

-question – 2 areas of synchrotron science (one to answer questions, other is expertise/design of synchrotron facilities). Pre-eminence could be defined in both of those categories. How are we doing in each of them?

-one mandate is industrial engagement (as a sub-category of the science). This is another area for us to consider our pre-eminence within. We seem to be a leader with the focused mandate – 25% focused.

-areas of industrial work/focus were discussed.

(-Other synchrotrons have company owned beamlines?)

What is the context – Canada or the world. If Canada, sure. If world, no. Many in the world one could argue are better than us. In Canada we have achieved that goal... but how competitive is that?

-We need CLS to succeed nationally beyond USask – so that it is not viewed as a USask facility.

-impacts – academic or industrial. Impact greatest in Saskatchewan. A few other key Ontario, Quebec, BC, Alberta. Other countries – US, Europeans and increasingly Asia. Agricultural capacity is a key and growing strength.

-Additional Atlantic researchers.

-Great soil science research including methods development and applications.

-Are there international standards as an outside measure (a metric) to ask about pre-eminence? Pre-eminence presumes global. We need a larger sense of our place on the global landscape.

-We were never set up to compete with the largest in the world... we need to pick our battles and focus on our strengths and key areas where we can lead.

-Is industrial focus a strength relative to international comparators? The 25% is mandated but is it really fully used? Other synchrotrons have beamlines have dedicated industrial facilities.

GG: What is meant by pre-eminence, suggest should be using other terms. Its for others to define pre-eminence

SU: External measurable? and we need to compare to other institutions tied to synchrotron.

PP: Not in the category but we wish to be well known nationally.

JP: Province known, scientific community outside province not well known. People aware it exists but not what it is pre-eminence in

CP: Why is it a signature area, is it just because we have a building

What is measurement of pre-eminence? One can count publications, could compare globally, profile/knowledge.

Unrealistic to compare with largest/newest facilities in world; perhaps peers are 3rd gen facilities on campus

Pre-eminence in applying synchrotron science to biomedical imaging, agriculture, anthropology/anthropology, and industrial research questions.

Complicated to measure contributions from standpoint of publications, also consider HQP and what they are doing now for careers,

Consider funding, business development that wouldn't have happened without CLS?

"It is obvious that USask is stacked with leadership in this area," especially within the Canadian context; but it takes reinvestment to continue this leadership.

There are a few areas of work in which to consider pre-eminence: relating to academic or industrial impacts as well as maximizing our facilities and faculty members.

Internationally, USask has not achieved pre-eminence, nor should we be expected to when compared to multilateral synchrotron facilities in Europe or large American, Japanese machines.

This said, there are areas, including agriculture, in which the CLS – USask community is coming close to global pre-eminence.

A key point was reinforced: the University of Saskatchewan has the engineering pre-eminence in Canada and this talent pool cannot be allowed to be lost.

The issue of the next generation of synchrotron science came to fore during our discussion. The tone was: essentially, if USask is to continue to play a lead role in Canada and beyond, then it must mobilize support on and beyond campus for the next generation synchrotron to remain on our campus.

Along with Dr. Ingrid Pickering, Dr. Singh helped to address this issue in the broader discussion.

A question of CFI support was raised, in particular as it is aligned with provincial, industrial and campus priorities.

There was a suggestion that there is room for more peer-to-peer support across campus, especially as new faculty members confront the stresses and strains of finding additional, matching dollars on CFI projects.

As far as additional work which needs to be undertaken: the University of Saskatchewan's synchrotron capacities need to be highlighted.

- In certain areas we pre-eminence but not maybe overall
- "pre-eminence" last 6 months at most

How might we strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the “next level”?

-Chairs were a strong component of supporting synchrotron science. With the chairs now ending the university could renew with a new generation of chairs to help sustain this momentum.

-Strong financial support to the CLS from USask has been key and help drive success.

-Continued support from Feds, Prov. and USask. As well as industrial sources, etc.

-Investment is key – chairs, other faculty recruits working in the area,

-CFI matching – critically needed – need a commitment at that stage rather than after the fact.. engage gov. early... help encourage large applications to support CLS with core and ancillary equipment.

-future – CLS 2.0 – Usask should commit to the goal of having it here in Saskatchewan

-are we drawing on best lessons learned? Are doing enough knowledge sharing. For some re-invention of the wheel.. peer mentoring?

SU: Need a sense of strategy to build the science. Not sure if a strategic plan to develop this signature area exists, if it does not well known

GG: Early day investment in chairs 9. Canada research chairs now 5 need to reverse this trend and discuss relocation of chairs elsewhere in the University.

JP: The interaction between scientist and synchrotron users is limited . Relationships are complicated.

SU: Goals of CLS and University overlap are complementary but not identical. Role clarity required

CG: Lower the wall between scientist and users

IP: NSERC CREATE inclusive grant to bring together a better network, Seen as a springboard for more. Need a centre of Synchrotron Science. Health training THRUST did a lot but was need a long term strategy to continue with training when training grants run out . Support from University required in terms of leadership, financial support etc Need a body in University to support this. Need leadership in this area

Publicity/general public knowledge; international interactions. In Latin America there is difficulty in explaining what one can do with synchrotron.

Friction between different groups of researchers (CLS, Usask, Global Institutes) would be better to build areas of commonality and gain momentum

Balance basic science and applied activities. Patent protection and IP research. Small molecule research for biotechnology. Focus on existing strengths and novelty of facility.

Build a new machine to stay on cutting edge.

Could for medical one focus on solving a problem like Multiple Sclerosis with synchrotron is a key component? Maybe if we had a leader on campus to coordinate

A related comment was that the CLS and USask appear as two separate entities (CLS letterhead no longer even has the USask logo) and in order to move forward, there needs to be greater connectivity.

The two entities need to appear as a coherent and cohesive community on our campus.

Perhaps a synchrotron centre needs to be put in place to facilitate coordination, communication, collaboration, including weekly seminars. Implicitly, the notion is that the CLS is not serving this role for the campus community.

Some newcomers to campus do not know how to engage nor interact with the CLS.

Finally, there was a notion that the CLS has slipped – even locally – in ensuring that campus and community stakeholders understand the research that is underway. It was recommended by Dr. Ajay Dalai that renewed efforts be put in place regarding communications, outreach and engagement.

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding USask's signature areas?

-Need to tap, mentor and support champions in pursuing infrastructure and other major grants related to synchrotron science.

-**Nobody wants to be the second dollar** – we need the University/province to be the first dollar to get the ball rolling.

-there is tremendous goodwill and support – we just need to be better at all pulling in the same direction. At times it feels like swimming upstream even within the USask system (e.g. large infrastructure grants).

CG; Once things are in place what is the long term reinvestment in faculty leaders to bring on board young faculty. Need a broad brush approach, strategic hires.

PP: Privileges to have it here. Need to re educate current and future faculty both at UoS and other institutions in Canada to use it. What are the intersections with other signature areas? These links need to be built on. Need champions / ambassadors.

CP: Better branding and marketing strategy to promote it make it shine, make it accessible

PP: We need to education

GG: Communications is key to both university community but also public advocacy should be ongoing and not over looked.

JP: CLS needs to be on board for outreach and need to be less insular. CLS need to be more engaged with the University Community.

Building/maintaining a synchrotron isn't enough. We should also invest in strategic faculty hires to keep critical mass and strengthen ancillary labs and capabilities.

Linking with cyclotron to do novel positron/photon imaging sciences may only be possible at a few facilities. Possible area for investment in chairs/faculty.

Continue from Terry Fonstad.

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

No, we have not achieved this on any level.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

We need buy-in from the CLS. Partnerships between research experts on campus and the CLS facility are limited and largely hindered by the pervasive culture of keeping those of us on campus who have helped shape the science (and in some cases beamline design and method and technique development) at arms length.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

We need significant outreach locally, nationally, and internationally. Researchers at the U of S can't do all of this, we need the CLS to meet us halfway and to be willing to go to national and international meetings do some of the outreach with us.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 1:55:14 PM
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Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Respondent skipped this question**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

I think there is confusion about what Synchrotron Sciences actually mean except for those who are in the field. I have heard lots of people talk about SS in the context of the infrastructure but not what the infrastructure results in. So i think the pre-eminence of the tool (ie the machine, the CLS) gets confused with the actual area which should be an interdisciplinary hive of impactful research that changes peoples lives and people understand how it makes their lives better. I think SS doesn't have enough connectivity with social sciences, humanities, fine arts.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

- better definition of whether we are celebrating pre-eminence of infrastructure or discovery.
- better communication about what the signature area is: are there areas of focus?
- how does the average person understand what the CLS enables in the world.
- measures of success

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

-we need a leader for this area; a focal point; a central spokesperson.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

-these are great opportunities to learn, share and discuss and should be a regular feature.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 1:31:25 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 06, 2021 2:18:38 PM
Time Spent: 00:47:12
IP Address: 174.2.187.132

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

In the Canadian context, we can say that we have been successful in this area; however, our group felt that this really needs to be measured not only in the Canadian context but also in the world context.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

The University should commit to faculty hires across the University that focus on recruiting researchers that are experts in synchrotron radiation techniques. The hires should be CRCs but also regular faculty members. Further, the group that I was a member of felt that committing to secure CLS2 on the UofS campus.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Increased engagement with government and industry stake holders to increase investment at the University.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

The meeting was well organized.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 2:05:59 PM
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Time Spent: 00:15:11
IP Address: 108.60.189.157

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**
What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**
To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**
To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?
too small?

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?
focus

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?
nope

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 06, 2021 2:05:17 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 06, 2021 2:45:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:39:53
IP Address: 142.165.218.189

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

In the national context, UofS has certainly achieved pre-eminence in this area due to the presence of the CLS on campus and due to the recruitment of several very productive and successful researchers who are using synchrotron radiation. In the international context, synchrotron science has helped a lot to keep UofS on the map as a respected research university.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Advancing the capabilities of the CLS in terms of modernization and faculty renewal would certainly help. However, on a cost-neutral basis: Just show more pride in the capacities and achievements of this signature area. I could not help but notice that the OVPR in the past seemed to have a two-tier system of signature areas, depending on the personal preferences of one or two key players. This prevented us from optimizing the benefits from some signature areas for the UofS.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Take a balanced approach: Support the signature areas and take pride in their accomplishments, but do not follow an all-or-nothing approach. A successful research university cannot run on signature areas alone.

Not supporting and celebrating the signature areas is obviously counterproductive for the university. On the other hand, too much public focus to the extent that "signature areas" is all we are doing creates resentment and is counterproductive for student recruitment. As with everything else in life, it's a matter of striking a prudent balance.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

My apologies, I could not attend. My vaccine arm was hurting so much that I could barely focus.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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IP Address: 70.64.12.115

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

No - there is a lack of strong tie between CLS and the USask. No leadership team provides oversight and coordination of research in synchrotron sciences. CLS is well-known but USask Synchrotron is not.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Build strong and close affiliation between CLS and the University - brand it as USask Synchrotron.
 Create a leadership team to oversight the research in this area and provide support, not to manage.
 Create programs for students (both USask and visiting students) to use the facility of CLS and conduct synchrotron science research.

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:19:36
IP Address: 216.197.221.71

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 Other (please specify):
 What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan? Extremely Active Adjunct Faculty Member!

Q2 **Agree**
 To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**
 To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4
 Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

I think USask has great strength in synchrotron science. I thought Graham's point about pre-eminence being a problematic word was on point - that word doesn't encompass the nuances of the ecosystem that has developed in sync science at our institution. I think we should reframe with a different word moving forward if possible.

Q5
 How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

The looming risk of CLS2 being here or somewhere else is creating an identify crisis for our institution. It would be great if CLS2 can be located in Saskatoon, but I think USask would benefit from decoupling our sense of worth from being the site of that facility. Sync science is not location specific, there are great sync scientists and users all over the world. We use facilities all over the world. USask can continue to support a strong and vibrant sync community even if it is not the site of CLS2. Don't get me wrong, it would be great if we could be that site, but if we aren't, throwing away the great community we have built would be a mistake, and devaluing ourselves would also be a mistake. I think USask can level up by not setting it's value as a sync science institution on the presence of the CLS exclusively, whether or not CLS2 is located in Saskatoon or not.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

The synchrotron community at USask and in Saskatoon is about more than the machine. It's about machine technology, applications, so much more. Wherever CLS2 is physically located, USask's sync user and design community can contribute and benefit, and I think we should be examining how we can maintain our strengths without betting the whole farm on CLS2. An important thing to remember with sync science is we, as users, go the best beamlines for our application. Whether that's SGM or Chicago or Diamond, we don't have to limit ourselves to the sync next door. The brains to use it, our people resources, have value wherever CLS2 is located and it would be a mistake to throw that all away, along with the signature area, if CLS2 isn't location in Saskatoon.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

I thought it was an effective meeting, as usually it would be nice in some ways if it had been a bit longer to allow for more discussion but on the other hand I think having this follow up form is a nice way to provide people with a "last word" so with that in mind, the length of the session was good. I really liked the breakout rooms. Nice job organizing this meeting Chris, the many warnings as we got closer to the end of the breakout was a very good move (lots of strong voices in the room that needed herding!). Welcome to the position of VPR Research Baljit, your clear voice and leadership are going to be a really great asset to Research at USask!

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, May 07, 2021 7:03:58 AM
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Time Spent: 00:01:06
IP Address: 207.195.10.21

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**
What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**
To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly disagree**
To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

I will start by challenging the premise of the question:

The signature areas were not formulated around pre-eminence.

When VP Chad presented the signature areas to council, I asked the president about the mismatch between the early messaging about 'pre-eminence' and the 'aspirational' language in the signature area presentation. McKinnon noted his disappointment that 'pre-eminence' was not part of the signature area selection. He noted that pre-eminence was a measurable quantity, that it is not an 'opinion' if USask was pre-eminent. "Signature areas" therefore, is about marketing rather than actual pre-eminence.

After this presentation, the phrase 'pre-eminence' would still creep into the discussion about signature areas. However, it was clear from the onset of the program that the signature areas were not defined by pre-eminence.

It's really not up to me to comment if we have reached pre-eminence in this or any other research area. Pre-eminence can be externally measured and validated, based on metrics (research funding, HPQ training, publications, etc). My opinion would be of 'impression' or 'reputation', which would be a largely subjective indicator.

That said, here's my opinion. I don't think we're a leader in the field of science with synchrotron radiation (I don't use the phrase 'synchrotron science' as that refers to a narrow area of accelerator physics, e.g. Mark Boland stuff, and not the broad field of science done with synchrotron radiation). There are universities with strong programs associated with their synchrotrons (Lund, Grenoble, Berkeley, Stanford, etc). Are we amongst them? No. Can we be? Yes, in a way appropriate to our institution and ambitions, that is, with coherent goals and a strategy to match those goals. We are not going to be Berkeley. But can we be strong and respected within the international community? I hope so!

Over the past +10 years, I am unaware of the existence of a coherent strategy to advance science with synchrotron radiation at the university. I have seen resources exclusively allocated to signature areas (such as graduate scholarships) without any apparent consideration of if these resources advance the signature areas. These resources do not advance strategy and their allocation takes away from other researchers, then this is a flagrant waste of money and opportunity.

There has not been clearly defined leadership for this effort, so it's unsurprising that this effort has drifted. Some signature areas (One Health) have obvious leadership (associate deans in the health sciences; CERCs / schools in topical areas). This has not (yet) been defined for science performed with synchrotron radiation. There's huge opportunity, if this is the case.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

a.) Have coherent and realistic goals for the research area and academic programs. Stretch goals are fine, but they need to exist on top of foundation building steps.

b.) From these goals, develop and communicate a coherent strategy. Communicating a strategy is generally easier if the strategy exists.

c.) Define, encourage and support leadership in the area. This includes formally assigned leaders (e.g. appointments with or without admin authority), leaders that emerge from funding projects (e.g. CREATE leaders, CFI project leaders) and informal leaders (individuals who show initiative).

d.) Resource appropriately and strategically.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

See above.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

Science with Synchrotron Radiation is an appropriate and strategic area for the university to invest. It will remain an appropriate area even if the signature areas program were dissolved or reformulated.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, May 07, 2021 11:43:13 AM
Last Modified: Friday, May 07, 2021 11:56:10 AM
Time Spent: 00:12:57
IP Address: 128.233.249.248

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

The lack of a coherent presence with a centre or a spokesperson means that the UofS does not have a clear pre-eminence in the synchrotron community, it is mostly known as the location of the CLS but not more.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

A better structure and leadership of the signature area with a spokes person, some admin resources for webpage, information for recruiters and course advisors for courses as well as graduate supervisors, monthly synchrotron seminars, maybe a centre status and a strategy to advance the field at UofS.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

There should more resources and coordination of the signature areas. Being a signature area should enable the whole to be greater than the sum of the parts, not just simply academics doing their own thing with a tag of signature area attached to their work.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

Annual events for the signature area should be planned to strategise and stay up to date and on what is happening in the area, find out who considers themselves to be a part of the synchrotron signature area, some of those who attended I had no idea what research they might do that is related to the synchrotron.

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 10, 2021 10:14:08 AM
Last Modified: Monday, May 10, 2021 10:27:13 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:05
IP Address: 128.233.10.180

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1**Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2**Strongly disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3**Strongly disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

- (1) Research is not valued on campus.
- (2) Research is not widely supported on campus.
- (3) Excellence is not advertised since the people who are in the position to do so, are unable to recognize excellent research.

Four obvious signs for this are the following:

- (a) The complete lack of independent graduate student funding (scholarships do not count toward this!).
 - (b) The increasing tuition for (especially foreign) graduate students is basically charging directly the try-council funds of the supervisors.
 - (c) Scholarships like the Dean's scholarship have basically become meaningless - in fact I would go as far as that the recipients of the Dean's scholarship in some departments are clearly the weakest of all grad. students.
 - (d) The ever continuing decline of U of S in the rankings. Yes, there maybe the odd ranking where we are still present in the top 500 but for the most part, we are racing downhill. This is terrible since students are leaving to pursue grad. studies elsewhere.
-

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

It all starts with graduate student funding since the graduate students are the people who carry the research.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Start with a realistic report about the current status of research activity on campus instead of glorifying it and endlessly repeating the mantra that U of S is one of the top Universities in Canada and strives to be the best.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

- We need a synchrotron institute/centre.
 - We need fellowships for students associated with the institute.
 - We need a series of talks advertising the various techniques available to the community.
 - We need people that lead SR initiatives on Campus and are contact points for people who have questions or need information. The CLS UEC chair is currently the only person like this on campus.
-

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 10, 2021 12:01:32 PM
Last Modified: Monday, May 10, 2021 12:04:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:44
IP Address: 70.64.36.175

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

Yes, but not enough recognition locally, provincially and almost none internationally

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

More funding and outreaching activities are needed.
Need of the establishment of connections with international synchrotron.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Creation of a representative of the signature area, and creation of chairs in colleges/schools to connect with synchrotron representative.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 1:39:09 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 5:15:05 PM
Time Spent: 03:35:56
IP Address: 64.201.222.150

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 Other (please specify):
 Research Associate (Research Staff)
 What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**
 To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**
 To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Synchrotron Sciences)

Q4
 Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Synchrotron Sciences signature area? Why or why not?

I would use "Neither agree nor disagree" expression if we had that option above. I have marked the question above "Agree", because there are many unique developments at the CLS itself. However, there are exists currently a number of more advanced than CLS, more strongly funded modern synchrotron facilities in the world. The CLS-II could be a response to the need of constant development in this research and technology area.

Speaking about the U of Saskatchewan, we know about multiple research projects undertaken at the university using CLS (and using other synchrotron facilities) with excellent results. One of important achievements has been development of a strong interdisciplinary research-training network, linking academics, researchers and graduate students using synchrotron techniques in the Biomedical research and applications based on CIHR-THRUST grant. Current success CREATE-INSPIRE program will take the development of such training network even further, by establishing a broader group of the academics, researchers and graduate students between Biomedical Physical sciences and Engineering.

However, in terms of funding, number of graduate students and publications in top journals connected to research in synchrotron sciences we are, currently, no higher than other leading Canadian Universities in this area.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

We need more funding to graduate students and junior researchers conducting studies in synchrotron sciences. These could be in the form of the new prestigious University of Saskatchewan's grants, fellowships and scholarships for graduate students, with focus on development of advanced synchrotron techniques or state-of-art application of synchrotron techniques to Biomedical, Agricultural, Material Sciences and Engineering area. University grant program for the International collaboration in the area of Synchrotron Sciences will be also very important. Hopefully, these measures could attract more top graduate students and researchers to stay or to come to our university.

Focus on development of comprehensive curriculum providing foundation for synchrotron studies for graduate and undergraduate students. This would require increase in number of new faculty of a high calibre with competence in the synchrotron techniques research and development.

Increasing public awareness by supporting outreach programs and broader publicity with respect to the achievements of Synchrotron Sciences at the University of Saskatchewan would serve to educate public and also attract possible investors to synchrotron –related products and applications.

We also should look into international expertise in marketing of synchrotron research related products and explore possibilities of the University of Saskatchewan in this respect

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

The advice would be to continue working collegially with the University academics and research staff and provide publicity in each managerial step undertaken in the signature areas.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Synchrotron Sciences Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 6, 2021.

That was great opportunity to connect to the colleagues and exchange opinions and suggestions. The only suggestion would be to provide possibility of mixing between the discussion groups during the session. Thank you for organizing this event!

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 4:34:53 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 4:46:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:11:16
IP Address: 142.165.170.89

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Water Security)

Q4 **Respondent skipped this question**

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Water Security signature area? Why or why not?

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Many people at the meeting spoke of the need to connect more with communities and promote the research results from our Water Security area. They also spoke of raising the international profile of the research. There is one important thing that we could do to address all of these concerns that no one raised: committing to making all research outputs from the signature areas open access. Researchers, students, practitioners, policy-makers, and many other interested community groups cannot access research that is locked behind expensive publisher paywalls. The results of Water Security research could benefit many disadvantaged communities and low-income countries, but these are exactly the groups most likely to NOT have access to the results. USask researchers might complain that OA fees are too expensive, but they can make their papers OA for free by posting them in USask's institutional repository HARVEST. There is no excuse for not committing to making this important research openly available to the world. This is precisely how we can be the university the world needs.

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Water Security Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 10, 2021.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 10:54:10 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 10:55:05 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:55
IP Address: 103.121.72.140

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Water Security)

Q4 **Respondent skipped this question**

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Water Security signature area? Why or why not?

Q5 **Respondent skipped this question**

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Water Security Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 10, 2021.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:02:44
IP Address: 70.64.12.115

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Water Security)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Water Security signature area? Why or why not?

Yes - by ranking and in some disciplines
No - lack of partnerships with industries and communities; not strong in all disciplines

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

leadership to coordinate and oversight this area; more interactions with communities and strategic partners; prioritize key disciplines; community outreach; more communications with campus and external communities

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Water Security Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 10, 2021.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 3:46:54 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 4:03:18 PM
Time Spent: 00:16:23
IP Address: 174.2.250.12

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Student (Non-Degree, Undergraduate, Graduate)**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (Water Security)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the Water Security signature area? Why or why not?

yes, different well-known lecturer have been coming (before pandemic) here for sharing their achievement and the UofS is playing as an international host in this Water Science field. But there is too much more to do.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

One long-term suggestion is preparing a global data base and gathering data from around the world, using available facilities in UofS and researchers, to not only making UofS more well-known globally, but also making money by selling high resolution/quality data especially for regions with lack of data.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

There is a big gape for making an opportunity for researchers inside GIWS and UofS to work as a team. Like conference, just results are sharing among researchs, but preparing a platform or gathering for sharing not only results, but also challenges (i.e, research questions, solutions, and ideas) through the way of research can really improve the efficiency of the system. Because researchers are thinking individually and just share the results, and as a student I can see the there is more potential for improving communication among the team to work as a team.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the Water Security Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 10, 2021.

It was interesting, especially dividing them in groups helped with having more opportunity to share ideas. But, ideas were not reflected after that which is one of the cons.

Water Security Signature Area Engagement

May 10, 2021

Breakout Room Summary

Have we achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? Why or why not?

- A point was made In Latin America, we have not been well-recognized or know about us
- It was asked how we can measure pre-eminence? A response was “According to the recently published 2020 Shanghai Ranking Consultancy’s Academic Ranking of World Universities, USask is ranked first and second in Canada for water resources research, and 20th in the world.”
- Many partners still not knowing us in certain countries. We are on the path, but more work needs to be done to achieve this and our advance or recognition.
- USask is leading in research outputs, but we should also improve connections to other fields—climate, agriculture
- UN sustainable development goals could be used as a framework to connect different disciplines. Need to work in a more connected and integrated way.
- Indigenization and decolonization – water is critically important, and gendered understandings of water connect well with this.
- generally yes
- social and policy issues need more work
- It depends on how we define the signature area. If “water security” > no. If “water” > yes. Got incredible expertise in water across campus. That expertise doesn’t map neatly on “water security”. Only a fraction of water research is directed to water security. Our work is much broader.
- What do you mean by “water security”?
- UN definition: “The capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of and acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability.”
- that would mean everything from population having clean water, first nation water security, crops, etc
- Yes, but we do a lot of work that doesn’t really fit into that. E.g. mechanistic understanding of processes, building of data and computational infrastructure. Water security is an application of that but not the only one. Not saying water security isn’t important but I feel that “water” would be a better signature area. “Water” is more general and inclusive than “water security” like “agriculuter” is.
- Isn’t water security the goal?
- Not really, some people work on better understanding of the earth system. This can make its way into models.
- If this is just knowledge on the shelf, what’s the use?
- Not sure if water security encompasses all the applications we’re interested in. E.g. my work has the water cycle as a component but it’s just one part of understanding and modelling the Earth system and the changes it goes through. It would be a shame if the signature area definition is too narrow and part of the campus does not feel involved.
- What about the institute for global water security?
- More a name than a function. You can put a spin on the research to make it appear about water security but it does not seem like the main goal.
- How to harness all this water knowledge into action and policy? Agriculture, infrastructure, etc. Have we reached pre-eminence in this area may not be the most interesting as this seems to be partly about definitions.
- Water security was the main goal when Howard Wheeler started but things have shifted somewhat since Jay F. The main goal may have shifted somewhat since this area was first defined.
- Difference between GWF and Global Institute for Water Security?
- GWF is a project within the GIWS. GWF includes quite a few partners across campus and different institutes that are not always part of GIWS.

- What about other purposes such as power generation? Are there any models available in Canada that predict how this changes under climate change? The economic impacts of dry spells can be very large.
- This has been looked at from POV of decision making under uncertainty. E.g. Gardner dam. Alberta releases 50% to Saskatchewan, Sask must release 50% to Manitoba. In dry years, water released from AB can vary and also depends on users. Decision must be made by managers how to allocate water to users including hydropower. We're looking into this now from economic point of view. We're also looking at this from sociological POV. Traditionally indigenous people rely on flooding for agriculture. We're studying how dams and water controlled by dams influence these social aspects.
- In 2050 Sask [?] is planning to go for 100% renewable. Do we have any predictions in that timeframe? All hydropower companies are reliant on precipitation for their power generation. Are there any forecasts?
- I believe existing models can do this. We do mostly climate projections, so yes, we're looking at the long-term as well. I can get you in touch with the actual people doing that kind of modelling.
- This may be more of a topic for follow up discussion. Quickly, when talking about long-term projections there is a lot of epistemic uncertainty and we can't be very precise. We're using specific storylines to investigate different possibilities.
- As an outsider from power generation, I would say that USask has reached pre-eminence in water security.
- Wouter, as a postdoc, what do you think?
- My PhD was in Europe and catchment hydrology so somewhat removed from water security, but I wasn't as such aware of USask as a center of excellence for water security.
- From my perspective, being number 1 in Canada is nowhere near enough. My goal is to move us from biggest in the world to best in the world. We're working hard on this and it seems to be leading into the second question.
- we have pre-eminence in Water, not Water Security
- Water Security is defined by UN as "The capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability."
- We focus more broadly on mechanistic process to describe earth system change
- What we actually do is much broader than water security
- It has gained global familiarity in the expertise the USask has in water security and we are recognized as a global leader in this area by ranking, such as #1 in Canada and #20 in the world by ARWU.
- We are reputed in areas such as hydrology and water security in cold regions, but there is a gap in the wider scope of disciplines in water security, such as water quality (clean water), social sciences in water, etc.
- From Indigenous standpoint, we didn't achieve pre-eminence – there is lack of mechanism and partnership with the communities. It is not appealing to Indigenous students.
- Partnerships and connections with industries are also lacking.
- We want to formalize our global brand on Water Security. The pre-eminence is seen in proposals and grant process, research, and publications, and now we need to highlight our reputation beyond research through kmb events, conferences etc...and in new ways.
- Some said we have gain pre-eminence since we are increasing so-publications, and improving rankings (2020 Shanghai ranking, USask and waterloo have ranked in water resources internationally, and has been constant year by year in the rankings); whether some other said that we haven't gain pre-eminence or recognition.
- Do we make it to the world? when we deal with partners more work has to be done, we haven't achieved pre-eminence, but we are on the path.
- We can use UN SDGs since those are focused in water management. We can use the SDGs as a framework, advancing in one signature are we can advance to other ones more focused in water management.
- Connecting Meti understanding of water security.
- Indignation and decolonization is based on women protecting water management.
- A global familiarity with your area of expertise.
- Pre-eminence and water security means that all communities have safe water. Until all communities have clean and safe water, then we have not achieved pre-eminence.

- The answer to this question depends on how you define water security and what areas you are looking at across campus
- If we define it in terms of scientific research, then we have achieved pre-eminence. For example, in the area of water science.
- We have not achieved it in terms of social sciences and humanities
- From an indigenous standpoint, we have also not achieved it. We need a way to establish partnerships with research experts who want to work with Indigenous communities in this area. There is a lot of potential for collaboration.
- Many of our researchers are pre-eminent in their area of study
- We have created a great reputation in the area of hydrology and water security in cold regions. In the broader field of water sciences, we still have areas to explore such as social sciences in water.
- We have a developed reputation locally and nationally but have room to grow internationally.

How might we strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the “next level”?

- We need to do in multi-disciplinary way. Establish more international relations. UN SDG framework. Need to create and strengthen more.
- Gender and social aspects are important. More holistic approach between disciplines and perspectives is needed.
- Water–food nexus is key. Expand this to include other areas of research as well.
- Need a unit to lead and connect with other signature areas. Real connection in the best way and tracked. Progress in one can translate to progress in others.
- Indigenous knowledge and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity principles are essential.
- community engagement
- more science
- more integration
- Two thoughts. (1) stronger link between science and models. Science = mechanistic understanding of processes we’re trying to simulate. Model development needs to be informed by process understanding. (2) Model development to applications. We’re building models of continents, planet, etc but the link with decision making is often missing. We’ve maybe not done a great job characterizing the uncertainty in these models. This needs to be done to use them for probabilistic decision making.
- There’s a need for the name to be out there. We have faculty who are globally leading and we may leverage their networks. It should be financially and scientifically attractive for new scholars to come here. We’re also thinking about outreach at elementary and high schools etc., domestic and internationally.
- Our tuition fee in Canada is second-lowest. To get to the middle number we’d need to increase tuition fee by about 70%. Does this implicitly indicate that our science is not great? We also don’t have a lot of money for scholarships etc.
- We have scholarships hoping we could attract a higher number of postdocs. We have not had many yet but the opportunity exists. Reputation does matter in addition to funding, but having the funding there attracts applicants.
- I don’t think we’re competitive in topping up scholarships. This is what the big US schools do. Our current policies are not bringing in the best of the best.
- There are policies in place that are not easily changed.
- People need to make the decision to be a professional engineer or a grad student. Having to take a massive pay cut to become a grad student is not very appealing.
- We’ve found that Canmore is a good recruiting tool. Stumbling block: bringing in grad students that are not part of USask. My class had students from 16 countries. Getting those in required passing some substantial administrative hurdles.
- This is also the case for existing postdocs. The admin side of things could be streamlined.
- I understand, it seems like an awfully complicated process for just attending a class.

- This is important because all the international rankings depend on your international connections and getting int. students in is a great way to promote these connections.
- What about integration of indigenous knowledge in water management? I don't know about anyone who knows how to do this but this seem like a huge opportunity.
- At the start of GWF we had the same problem, how to engage indigenous communities. We had pushback on the initial proposal because it was not created together with the indigenous communities. We've started from scratch and involved the indigenous communities from the beginning. Reviews of these proposals were mixed because international reviewers are not aware of the challenges local indigenous communities face. We had an indigenous co-lead for all of these.
- One - need to make strong link between science and models to strengthen theoretical underpinnings
- Two - link between models and decision making. We need to do a better job of communicating uncertainty. Need to be able to use models for probabilistic risk assessments
- Predictions on time scales from seconds to centuries
- One - need to make strong link between science and models to strengthen theoretical underpinnings. Two - link between models and decision making. We need to do a better job of communicating uncertainty. Need to be able to use models for probabilistic risk assessments
- Predictions on time scales from seconds to centuries
- Focus on hiring best of the best, need programs to attract these
- Does it hurt that tuition is so low? This hurts reputation, must be a poor school to be so cheap, Second don't have money for scholarships
- Created PhD excellence awards \$45 000 awards to attract high powered post-docs. Have not been successful getting applications at the 'best of the best' level. Recruit through faculty networks.
- We don't top up NSERC fellowships and lose out on best of the best because of it.
- Canmore is a good recruiting tool. bringing in outside research students, postdocs attending classes has extreme administrative burden
- Very difficult for postdocs to take courses, need to send transcripts, etc. Too cumbersome
- Make it easier to register for courses for non-U of S students.
- All international rankings depend on collaboration and linking with students from other institutes is key for this.
- Can we integrate indigenous knowledge
- Are expanding outreach to get indigenous consultation and buy-in at proposal writing/call stage
- Support local and national organizations working on water security with stakeholders like Indigenous communities.
- A more collaborative and collective approach is needed – this is not a role of a single institute or an individual but everyone's.
- Supporting networks for students (eg. mentorship and elders) are needed to attract more Indigenous students.
- Build the Indigenous perspective into leadership in water security.
- Cleared definition of Water Security is needed.
- Leadership is needed to represent each signature area and help to connect within and amongst signature areas. The leadership team is not to manage the signature area, but it is to oversight and provide support and coordinate all involved research and initiatives as well as seek more investment into it (financial resource and personnel).
- More resources area needed not only for the research, but also for the establishment of channels of communications.
- More community engagement is needed in research.
- Develop more connections and communications across campus to raise the awareness of Water Security and create more available accesses for faculty, staff and students.
- Co-develop and co-design projects that help form real actions steps. How or should we create agenda to move forward collaborative projects.
- Look at Water Security from a social science and cultural perspective.
- Provide local projects and research to inform global Indigenous drinking water, waste water issues;

- Provide sustainable solutions and technology that have longevity (solar etc.);
- Provide training opportunities in Indigenous communities, and contribute to long-term benefits;
- Link the research to policy, synergies with other Signature Areas (Food Nexus and Indigenous Nexus)
- A good location for an Indigenous Water Centre (Specifically Kerry)
- The signature area needs to generate new partnerships between signature areas and promote long-term solutions locally and globally, while maintaining its strength in leadership
- Water is connected with climate and with sustainable management.
- In the future we should connect with agriculture for better use of the water resources.
- Strengthening the international relations to keep publishing and developing research.
- Multidisciplinary and multi-institutional among signature areas and with international research institutions.
- Bringing social and gender aspects are important to include in water security, to work holistically, to bring different perspectives. Increase education.
- Moving the six signatures areas together, jointly, no signature area leaving behind.
- Overlap existing among the signature areas, need of advancing together.
- Indigenous understanding, diversity of perspectives, in terms of life ways, transportation.
- In global water futures is important equity, inclusivity and indigenous knowledge to bring pre-eminence.
- Need to support the organizations that work on these specific issues – both locally and provincially.
- Take a collaborative and collective approach to support the work of Indigenous communities.
- Recognizing the need for support for Indigenous students who are entering these signature areas.
- Would like to see Indigenous perspective at the leadership as to what is water security, what it means and how we do it.
- Need to look at how we are defining water security from different angles.
- Would like to see the creation of more avenues for people to connect with each other across campus to have access to information and resources.
- Explore what water means to different cultures.
- Would be helpful to co-develop and co-design projects that help to form real action steps. How or should we create agenda to move forward collaborative projects?
- Create a special program for Water Security in Indigenous communities

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding USask's signature areas?

- Internal funding programs? Or for linking? Something to propel the way forward.
- Resource comes in different forms. For budget, needs to be in service to the research mission. Strategic funds are being used strategically for signature areas.
- Perhaps a signature events/conference – elevate to a global stage, spur activity and collaborations. There have been pilots for this. e.g., People Around the World, online health conference.
- 'research clusters' at U of Regina for signature areas. A leader was designated to champion areas and hold events with institutional support. The same could be done here.
- Add the signature areas to a research plan. Roadmap for higher level for a vision towards this. Help us see where to go with the signature area.
- Need to look at the gaps and where to fill them. A conference might help to bring this out and see if other areas can help fill.
- Champions need to be part of a working group and exchange ideas openly. A 'Signature area working group'. Do along the same lines with funding opportunities. Partnership group.
- manage and integrate
- Engage scholars to conduct more field research with Indigenous communities.
- Create a process to secure Indigenous knowledge and give back to the communities – a more reciprocal relationship and partnership
- Develop stronger partnerships, linkages and accesses with government (all levels), industries and end-user groups of the research and technology.

- Learn from the communities (Indigenous) and share educational resources on emerging issues such as societal issues.
- Heather Dorries at Carleton would be a great addition to the signature area:
<https://carleton.ca/gwi/people/heather-dorries/>
- Increase financial support, ensure sustainability in the program, enhance the efforts;
- Generate special projects and priorities within the signature area;
- Increase the number of conferences;
- Increase collaborations between signatures areas, colleges, universities;
- Protect enrolment;
- Provide a top-up fund to attract leading PDF, students, collaborators;
- Create opportunities for Indigenous partners, communities;
- Envision an Institute for Prairie Waster Water (Specifically Kerry)
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- Envision an Institute for Prairie Waster Water (Specifically Kerry)
- We need more support and would like to set up strategic planning to secure and expand
- Have a champion to take the lead to help to connect areas.
- Development of internal programs to fund and support the connection among signature areas, and within.
- Funding for research and not research to bring funding.
- Signature areas event or a regular fair to showcase research and elevate the event to a global stage, we could spur a lot of activities within areas and with external research institutions. Networking.
- Bringing the signature areas into a “research plan”, a strategic planning with specific goals. Leading by champions to bring this conversation up.
- Filling up the gaps at the ground level, for example environmental preparedness; cooperation among areas; are we able to identify problems and we could get support from other area expertise to help to fill up the gaps.

One Health Signature Area Engagement

May 7, 2021

Breakout Room Summary

Have we achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? Why or why not?

- depends on how you define it. It was a good thing to define the importance of One Health a few years ago, but it hasn't been as broadly successful across campus.
- timing was off to link this with Indigenous research. Now that Indigenous health is ramping up, less seems to be happening with One Health. Together, these two areas could be great. Relationships with MNS and Chiefs are in better place (as are Indigenous faculty). Would like to see Indigenous Health linked to One Health (e.g. Chair in these 2 areas). So thin on the ground in that there is not enough behind us. Signature areas require a bigger thought process of what we need. Constant struggle to recruit HQP. Needs the university to take the lead in bringing the right people together. Has seemed like a losing battle by relying on individual relationships and growth. But, potential is endless!
- so many opportunities and so many requests. Would benefit from higher-level administrative support from central. With a team to help bring along researchers at different career stages to build a cluster and mentor the group. So individual faculty members in these areas need not struggle and do this off the side of their desks. Look to international aspects but hard to maintain the momentum on their own. Need social community experts and team building. USask has been recognized as world leaders.
- this area still lacks a well-understood definition. See faculty who erroneously identify as doing one health and some who don't seem to realize that they are. Speaks for the need for greater cohesion.
- No, but there is a lot of potential
- Have the expertise and the research
- A lot of barriers; lots of listening frequently not followed by action
- Lack of leadership and transparent communication in some cases
- Change seems to be difficult to achieve
- Difficult to attract top quality trainees
- One Health frequently not well understood outside of vet med
- Foster thinking outside the box of who to talk to
- Leveraging relationships to find the information
- Respiratory Research Centre (RRC) great example of what we need- helped gain better understanding from medicine and other disciplines – facilitate communication and collaboration between different researchers
- One Welfare is an important aspect
- Community and patient oriented research, how One Health plays out in the real world
- Tell government what the issues are and why this matters
- Great facilities, so much potential, but also a lot of barriers
- Support individual faculty with focus on One Health
- Continue support interdisciplinary groups, such as RRC, which embody One Health
- Educate general public on One Health, integrate with Extension
- Branding & outreach needed, integrate into extension work, communication
- Interprofessional education should include veterinarians
- Align standards with university signature areas; consider in assignment of duties
- Support faculty and give them the time they need to contribute to signature areas
- One-health is so big it is hard to make this claim
- We have programs that are performing well – but have we found ways to connect them? The components of one-health should be connected in a practical way – do we have the vehicles to do that?
- We need to define what we mean by pre-eminence
 - o Is it about research, grad studies, education, etc?
- Definitely a lot of activity in this field at the U of S
- Don't know enough about the networks linking them
- A very broad area
- We have certain areas that are preeminent (vido, synchrotron, etc) – but does that make the whole signature area pre-eminent?

- One-health had its origins in the vet college and then spread out
 - o It hasn't been clear that one-health permeates across all disciplines – not just HSc (traditional) colleges
 - o Interaction from multiple colleges – even social sciences
- Environment plays a big role in everything
- Is One-health a produce of the tail-wagging the dog?
 - o We are looking for things we are doing and adopting it – as opposed to deciding what is our priority and supporting it with extra resources?
- One-health activities might be a bit disconnected
- How would be bring the right people into the right room and coordinate something around a goal/objective of the signature area
- Incentives
 - o Time and supports are huge
 - o Teaching relief etc
 - o Coordination etc
- Identifying individuals who can be involved
 - o Mid career people are often looking for what their focus will be
 - o They might be a good idea
- What are the big problems that one-health needs to tackle? Let's identify them and put resources into them.
- Competitive process? Vs identification for people who are going to be on a "team"
- Bring a nucleus of people to get an initial idea going. (an idea that the university values)
 - o Then they bring in people later as we need.
- What is the purpose of the signature area (s)
 - o Is it about what we are strong in?
 - o Or is it identify of our employees? I.e., can everybody see themselves in one of our areas of focus?
- We have lots of activities that could be identified as one-health but some times they are not considered in this category?
- Has the signature areas actually changed what we have achieved?
 - o Could we have achieved all these things anyways
 - o "maybe we have been doing one-health all along but now we are just giving it a name.
- Have we recruited grad students or faculty b/c we have a "one-health" area?
 - Think of this from 2 aspects: 1) ground-up, from scratch - informal group of PI's; 2) systematic structure from the top, the university identifies where we grow
 - Variety between the signature areas; ex. Agriculture is tied to a college; others are more broad; ideas of how we can strengthen signature areas
 - It's a big question, and an important one. Reproductive science, lots to learn; vaccinology.
 - Need to find a way for the average scientist to buy into these and allow them to bring their ideas forward
 - Don't simply "choose the chosen one"
 - Not all areas have been successful in one health
 - College of Medicine doesn't have a lot of involvement in one health
 - How will we engage young people? For example, even high school students
 - No signature area at this University relating to human health specifically. We only include human health research in the context of One Health. This restricts the focus from human health and biomedical research. Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture has addressed many aspects of human health in the context of agriculture. Also, Indigenous peoples' connection with the land is a connection with one health and there has been excellent progress relating to Indigenous health. We have clusters of researchers doing excellent work. We have not yet achieved the potential for One Health at this institution.
 - Suggest another signature area call Human Health or "Our Health". There is no signature area that effectively focusses on human health directly.

- There needs to be more communication. We do not always know what One Health initiatives are ongoing at the U of S.
- We achieved a lot but we might not yet pre-eminent yet. As an example, the COVID virus started in animals but we do not spend enough time understanding/studying disease in animals that ultimately affect people. This type of conversation is essential.
- We lack University level leadership on one health.
- Some signature areas such as water does not address One Health
- We have not yet achieved pre-eminence in the area but we do have an opportunity, responsibility to drive the One Health Research Agenda.
- We have gained some pre-eminence and visibility in some individual areas within One Health, but not on intersected areas.
- One Health is a broad area to focus in bringing pre-eminence as a whole, but has been easy by individual areas within One Health.
- Need of resources to support collaborations that can bring recognition of the work done within the broad are of One Health.
- We have all the pieces to be pre-eminent in the area, but we need to include other areas that are being behind because there is no clear goals or guidelines on how to align within the signature area.
- Within SENS work is done mainly as interdisciplinary, however there are major barriers for integrative work.
- One Health is not well recognized by campus and external communities.
- It is a siloed approached that not many efforts to get all related disciplines together.
- We have gained some pre-eminence and visibility in some individual areas within One Health, but not on intersected areas.
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- Within SENS work is done mainly as interdisciplinary, however there are major barriers for integrative work.
- One Health is not well recognized by campus and external communities.
- It is a siloed approached that not many efforts to get all related disciplines together.
- What are the indicators of pre-eminence? Issues of how signature areas were set up. Faculty protested it a little bit. Pre-eminence means global signature excellence – we have failed miserably. International standard of excellence measurements – published every year. Who is eminent in One Health (1%) – many in engineering but only 3-4 in one health. Lot of talent has left the signature area. Many students excited about One Health. If you google One Health, will students want to come USask?
- One health should be an integration of life sciences, vet medicine. Restructure of CoM has led to lack of incentives. Scientists need to talk to clinicians and work closely together. ITrap program can change career paths – wasn't broad enough to include clinical streams. For students Faculty feel One Health hasn't been developed well and we haven't achieved anything great. How many papers have been published with researchers and clinicians?
- One health can defined in many different ways – how are humans dealing with particular illness? How can clinicians be brought in. There is no continuum and there seems to be a lack of planning.
- No – a lot of potential though
 - o Big issue: appears that admins don't care much about research, not willing to make changes to support research
 - o Behind the scenes things are difficult; lots of experience of folks wanting to make change but then nothing happens, despite appearance of receptivity
- Have a hard time getting top-quality trainees at the U of S as well
 - o Potentially start a synchrotron community to share research and start fellowships as well (to attract folks away from other, higher-rated institutes)

- Extra carrots to attract folks might help since Saskatoon is not as much of a draw as a place to live for folks compared to other locations.
 - What else could be done, other than more money?
 - More transparency with faculty (downstream transparency)
 - Can help with problem solving when everyone knows the barriers and opportunities, rather than keeping information behind closed doors (where leadership are privy and other stakeholders aren't)
 - More communication as well
 - This is a really collaborative campus and friendly as well
 - One Health – doesn't resonate externally (with lay people and donors etc)
 - Very little success in fundraising for these
 - As an institution we say 'One health' but if not for the people at WCVM, things wouldn't go ahead
 - Buzzwords are frustrating and can mislead people or can be substance-less lip service
 - Including veterinarians – we are bought in, but it's harder on the human medical side of things
 - Once we are outside our sphere, it's harder to get this in the mainstream
 - Lead by threatening is a problem (there's no money, do more work, etc)
 - What can vets do – help promote this more
 - Collaboration is important
 - With other disciplines
 - With community
 - With government
 - Conduit between folks on the ground and policy/decision makers might help to get the communication out there in a better way
 - Public sentiment about academia is often problematic ie/ they think we are 'just' teaching; not as much support as there would be if folks actually knew what goes on here
 - Idea: grants splitting up so folks can get more time to do what they need to do, rather than just adding more work for people (particularly pre-tenure)
 - Promotion and tenure standards don't always reflect these priority areas; community-based work, extension work, etc are ALL under one health, but often aren't rewarded in a way that encourages people (particularly pre-tenure people) to do the work, and often even discourages this work
 - Merit is also an issue; politics in the department can also present problems where even if P&T standards are altered, they're thought of as more of a suggestion as opposed to a rule (ie/Indigenization efforts are minimized as far as value in comparison to a peer-reviewed publication)
 - Things to standardize are often not actually able to be in practice due to the differences between departments, and between individuals in departments
 - Branding and outreach of OneHealth and research under it
 - Bringing community together who are interested in these areas on campus and outside
 - One Health at U Calgary has speaker/seminar series that brings folks together on OneHealth topics regularly
 - Have we achieved pre-eminence yes but the one health initiative – we have led but others have caught up and have surpassed us.
 - What is Guelph's institute of One Health, do we need an institute.
- We do great work but can we be more coordinated and collaborations. More synergies opportunities. Team up with other opportunities
 - One health here is hit or miss here versus what I heard about it outside USASK. Coordination and alignment is missing. When I first got here – USASK is inward looking and difficult to shift. They are very active researchers and do they feel there is no reason to change.
 - I believe there are not the barriers to collaboration at USASK – easier here than other places that I have worked. Brainstorming, what are new connections we can make to do things new.

- I don't know if one health is pre-eminent? What is the measure of success, communication what does success look like? I joined to learn about the initiative.
- Difficult to link what I do with one health and there appear to be "walls" that limit the connectivity.
- USASK has tended to be inward looking and silos within USASK. Lots of activity but not aligned
- We need to energized USASK how do we connected, how do we move it out? How do we jump to the next orbit?
- It is such a huge area, is it even possible to determine if we are pre-eminent?
- So multi-disciplinary, hard to even now or define that.
- Have we brought the elements of one-health together in an interdisciplinary way?
- Broad area – signature area webpage
- We have areas that are pre-eminent and stand out, like VIDO and work at the Synchrotron (So from a facilities perspective).
- VIDO has infectious disease and now human infectious disease, do we connect it with Environmental sciences? Are we bringing the right people together under the one-health umbrella?
- From a library perspective, one-health had a genesis through the Vet College. And one-health has landed on the health and animal scientists and permeates through all colleges and units. We could do a better job of growing in the indigenous areas. We could do better at moving it into the social sciences.
- We have done a lot with farmer safety, but we see how powerful the environment plays into. The one-health conference we had in Saskatoon – that was also very animal, human and we could do better to link in the environment.
- Part that we struggle with – is it a product of the tail wagging the dog? Let us see what we have on campus, and call it one-health, when we do not have a priority structure or strategy? We are not steering things – maybe we have just looked at our strengths on campus and named it as one-health.
- Could we have events to bring different groups together? Try to create more crosstalk.
- The inter-disciplinarity beyond animal and human health, but everyone is busy, and busy with core-activities. We have tried different activities to bring people together and it has worked in the human/animal health side, but how do we bring the people together in the right room to solve problems.
- Is it a leadership issue? Is it disconnected? Could we coordinate things on campus, rather than having siloed activities – health and animal to the exclusion of the others?
- How do we bring people in the room – and importantly – how do we incentivize people to do this? And how do we set out the research problems we want to solve? There might have to be a prize/incentive at the end of the day?
- What have we achieved because of the signature area that we could not or did not achieve without the label of this signature area? (But could have been achieved anyway already.)
- Have we been doing on-health all along? And now we just put a label on it? It is an identity?
- Do we attract faculty and researchers and grad students because we have the one-health label?
- At one point we had it and it slipped away from us. Due to the fact that some of the leaders in the signature areas left (Baljit, Bruce Reeder, Hugh Townsend).
- CREATE grant did what we said we wanted to do but wasn't matched with collaborative research efforts nor was it followed up afterwards. It remained a successful training program but could have been leveraged into something more. When it ran out, we lost our slight advantage to now other Universities who are much stronger in the One Health Area. That's not to say we couldn't regain.
- Not enough engagement with COM historically and the human health aspect. VIDO and WCVI were strong but COM was quite a bit weaker.
- Indigenous work is integrated into existing opportunities – what was special about one health there was invitation in for Indigenous partnerships. I'd love to see this continue.
- Not sure what the metrics for pre-eminence in One Health are nor where the bar is for pre-eminence. We need to set some collective goals in this regard and measure progress towards them.
- Some other successes under One Health banner: SCPOR, reproductive health and there is room for this to grow so much more.
- Animal health has been the focus, rather than human and environment connections. Its hard to get the commitment, buy-in and contributions from human health colleagues.

- One Health international conference was held here in Saskatoon and the general challenge for One Health globally was also present in that conference – lack of interest, participation from human health researchers
- Is the concept of One Health too dated now? It's not a new concept anymore. It is worn out a bit. COVID shows us that Public health is where we need to be. One Health is one way to approach public health (local, global, international, human, animal, environment). These are all part of public health. One Health alone is almost is not enough. COVID 19 is showing us that One Health hasn't provided a solution to it. One Health is too limiting almost. Public Health is a bigger concept.
- We now have more capacity around Indigenous academic and scholarly work (and the idea of the IHRTC). We've moved from pockets of expertise in Indigenous scholarship. There is increased capacity and opportunity that we didn't have before.
- how do we measure pre-eminence? Is it aspirational? Does this language resonate for people?
- as a researcher, when we think about areas of pre-eminence, thinking about building from scratch (informal gathering of researchers deciding to work together), or a systematic structure from the top – an area we will grow into, invest resources – come from both ends.
 - need more leadership, strategic plan around these Signature Areas – they vary greatly between the six – they could have an evergreen Signature Area strategy, and better communication
- where have we achieved pre-eminence? – reproductive science, and use of animal models to predict what happens with people
- new VIDO pandemic centre will have global consequences, and be pre-eminent
- one thing we need to do is find a way to allow the average scientist to buy into these Signature Areas, find a path forward to bring their ideas forward – sense of inclusion and welcoming
- be careful not to choose the chosen ones – there's a lot of hidden talent, and finding that hidden talent is really an important thing to do
- One Health has achieved pre-eminence in vaccinology, and infectious diseases, but other areas have not been as successful in One Health
- what does it mean to Saskatchewan in general?
- One Health is not very prominent in the College of Medicine; the animal researchers, vets seem to be much more cognizant of it than human health researchers
- CoM more focused on chronic diseases, not infectious diseases and vaccinology
- in non-pandemic times, chronic disease is much more prevalent
- in a recent conversation with a colleague from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, they said “we are trying to do One Health without health – there isn't enough contribution from health people”
- is the name of One Health an issue? Is it too narrow?
- should this Signature Area include areas important for Saskatchewan Health – include all the chronic diseases, otherwise those areas don't receive the attention that they should?
- CoM doesn't seem to be having much involvement in One Health, from the perspective of a participant who is a graduate student
- how do we engage early career researchers? How will we engage young adults – high school students? Most people don't have any idea about what One Health means
- most departments across campus are not knowledgeable about One Health at all

One Health Pre-eminence

- Group's initial reaction is that we have not achieved pre-eminence in this area, but some of this perception may come from ignorance or lack of understanding.
- One Health has not achieved the level of pre-eminence that other signature areas have
- There is a lack of leadership in a chair position or really high level focus
- Other institutions come to mind that are clearly associated with this area of expertise and strength. Such as other institutions that have an 'Institute of XXX' or 'Centre of excellence in XXXX' with dedicated staff and linkages with other international institutions.
- Since One Health seems to originate from vet colleges and every good vet school has this animal-human focus, is it really distinctive?

General thoughts on One Health signature area

- Suggest a name change for the signature area – not sure to what, but One Health seems to be hard to distill it down to be understandable and define it.
- The naming does not infer action or goals – for example, the Water Security area has a name that includes a visionary statement or end goal in the name with the word ‘security’. Could something like this be done for One Health.
- Which researchers really fit well into this area? Many people are struggling to find a way to fit. Concerns with feeling like research has to fit into all 3 areas of the triangle in order to be truly One Health. Is addressing 2 or the 3 prongs sufficient? Maybe a better definition of what makes a person a one health researcher – anyone working in two or more of the areas? There is not enough information on the website to fully understand the area.
- Interestingly, there is at the same time too much specificity and yet too broad of a focus in our One Health area. For example, we are all dealing with the concepts every day, but it somehow still lacks focus when trying to transition that to research
- Non-USask perspective from group member – can see the different areas of human and animal health and synchrotron and VIDO in our discussions, but can quickly see the broad definition of One Health being really problematic and hard for people to grasp.
- Overall needs a better goal or vision.
- As a smaller institution, are we trying to be everything to everyone? Is one health an example of this phenomenon? We can’t excel at everything all the time – would a better focused area help with this?
- Human-animal interface is a hot topic especially right now with COVID-19. Name that suggests a vision would really help in this area – allowing people to have immediate recognition of the name and the focus – is there an evident focus? Something to do with pandemic response
- There needs to be a better network of One Health researchers working in the One Health sphere. What is value add from working collaboratively in this area?
- Significant challenge is making connections and really knowing what is happening across the university and how researchers can fit into this. Even those writing a One Health grant are somewhat silo’d and finding their own teams for each grant.

Future One Health signature area strategies:

- Journal clubs and venues for sharing and focusing on One Health from an institutional level - it is possible these exist but our group was not aware of them
- Money talks – is there seed money, strategic investments, or other funds to help strengthen this area?
- Need more linkages within and beyond university - there seem to be a lot of little pieces and individuals reaching out to make connections, but the little pieces aren’t connecting well or adding up to anything substantial.
- It is the only obvious, health-focused signature area and many people can’t see a fit here. There are a lot of researchers who feel they are not recognized by the university for their research because they can’t fit into a signature area?
- Strategic Chair positions and CFREF funding have really driven the success of other areas and this is what one health needs to be more competitive. However, is it feasible to recruit chairs here like we have done for Agriculture and Water Security (high-level chairs) or have we reached our natural capacity for Chairs?
- Revise the significance level of VIDO in a signature area. Their transition during COVID-19 and new funding could this be a piece of One Health going forward.

Signature Areas in general

- Maybe it is time for a new health-related signature area in addition to One Health. Renaming One Health would make it also possible to add another health area without it being perceived as repetitive or too health-focused.
- In pharmaceutical company meetings – there is a lack of biomedical expertise represented in our signature areas. It is really hard to compete in this area with industry funding because we are known for animal health and infectious diseases by the One Health area as represented on our website. i.e. this is the focus they see when ‘researching’ our institution. This is what industry perceives.

- Lack of information on the website – this makes it extremely difficult to understand the nuances of the signature area. There was previously a lot more information on the website/supporting documents and it was not a good change to go to the current presentation. It would be very difficult for an outsider coming to USask website to see what the signature areas actually are about.
 - The importance of Indigenization cannot be overstated – but should Indigenous Peoples be a signature area, or is it better positioned as a guiding, overarching principle that it is integrated into all the work being done (i.e. integrated as appropriate and in a meaningful way). It could give the impression of being a research silo in the current presentation.
- The general feeling of the group was ‘no’
 - Some reasons that were discussed:
 - Definition of One Health is very broad and lacks focus; therefore, concept of One Health is a bit elusive and challenging for researchers to see how they can fit into; it also makes it difficult to really ‘push’ the area of One Health
 - At the same time, almost anything can be ‘made to fit’ into One Health but if pre-eminence is to be achieved, resources need to be available and focused
 - There’s a (historical?) sense that human medicine does not have One Health on the radar to the same extent that veterinary medicine does
 - Other signature areas at UoS have research chairs behind them – a lot of money has gone into those areas and raised their profile (e.g., global water security)
 - Many in the group couldn’t mention specific One Health initiatives at UoS while quite a few could list a number of big initiatives related to other signature areas
 - Definition of pre-eminence? What is it really in the context of One Health? To some extent relates back to the broad definition of One Health
 - There are other institutions that come to mind before UoS as ‘centres of excellence’ in One Health (e.g. UoMinnesota; UCDavis) – most of these have a central institution of some sort that pushes One Health initiatives

How might we strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the “next level”?

- There needs to be a critical mass of individuals. Administrative cohesion isn’t enough. A critical underpinning of One Health is interdisciplinarity. If one were to look around campus to look where we do have strength (e.g. infectious diseases), which should be a clear connection to other disciplines who also have a stake in this area.
- Disconnect between One Health opportunities and Indigenous Health research (e.g. CRC in TB). Being able to partner closely to look at innovative research with partners at the center, will make all the difference. Would like to talk about NEIHR model across all signature areas. Indigenous Health Centre at Whitecap is an opportunity for collaboration. Think every signature area should have a designated leader meeting frequently and have someone in administration tapping disparate groups leverage tri-agency opportunities.
- Succession planning- mentoring at different levels. (3 leads at different stages like what Caroline’s center has). Recruitment and retention is a key challenge.
- Missing out on big funding opportunities. One Health graduate program. Saw it as taking off but has flatlined.
- One health course and take it international (Vikram and Caroline have discussed something like this) to engage international Indigenous students (Maori, Australian, etc.). Students needed to work collectively and then bring it back to their institutions.
- In the past 10 years, we’ve identified our areas of strength. To build in signature areas, we need to start at the grass root level. Suggestion: university should invest money in undergraduate and graduate work in these areas. Create the awareness and build toward individuals coming to these areas.
- Will have push back from others who don’t fit these areas. Possibly have another signature area related to one health?
- To measure against something, what formal metrics do we have in place? Objective measurements; mentorship to early researchers and grad students would be helpful.
- Incentives for researchers

- Coordination across the signature areas
- Need a champion to drive the agenda (Colleen add – informally was Doug Freeman)
- Create a repository of expertise on campus so linkages can be forged.
- A meeting such as this reflects the interest in the topic of One Health
- One Health grants (\$20,000) were productive
- Need someone dedicated to facilitating One Health.
- Have a source of funding can help foster transdisciplinary collaborations
- Some funding can also help determine if the team can and does work effectively together
- Agree that financial investments are required. Can make a case to approach other funding agencies.
- Communication with e.g. CIHR
- Need to be sure we create action and deliverables.
- More resources area needed not only for the research, but also for the establishment of channels of communications.
- Leadership is needed to represent each signature area and help to connect within and amongst signature areas. The leadership team is not to manage the signature area, but it is to oversight and provide support and coordinate all involved research and initiatives as well as seek more investment into it (financial resource and personnel).
- More community engagement is needed in research.
- Definition of clear goals and priorities, so everyone will understand how to fit in the signature area.
- Creation of more frequent interactions among all related disciplines including animal health, human health, environmental sciences, etc. to exchange ideas, learn from each other what everyone is doing and find common grounds.
- More access and communications need to be provided to faculty and students, particularly the new hires and younger scholars.
- Funding is a barrier. Research support function – impacts clinicians, facilitators, no money to build structures and basically expect researchers to find their own way. Under resourced overall. Funding in VPR office has been decimated over the years, and they cut items in colleges and expect faculty to find their own way while trying to maintain their own portfolios.
- Provincial government invests very less in research. Planning has been the same, execution has failed over the 35 years. One health in VIDO is spectacular – tons of money. A pandemic caused VIDO to get all the money. Biochem students not getting jobs in Canada. Reality is 1 in 26 will have an academic job. USask should encourage students to work in industry and build start-ups.
- Opportunity for more collaboration and it appears to be easier
- What is One Health – what is the definition, what does success look like, need to link up the Indigenous with one health. Build linkages across the university.
- Communication across campus – more communication; An Indigenous hub to ensure the linkage?
- We were made aware of the Indigenous health committee and linkage and an indigenous health cluster which is good resource but we need to make sure everyone knows what resources are available
- We need to get out and bring people in – The University needs the world – the opportunity to engage
- The One Health Conference here – was disappointing it was not easy to build the linkage
- Do we have a strategic plan?
 - Fund to incentivize collaboration.
 - Or support to incentivize collaboration? Everyone is busy – so clear people’s plate for a year (no teaching etc.) and go after things?
 - If we had the time and the focus, then we could maybe apply for big grant opportunities.
 - It could be research facilitation support to help bring together grants/applications?
 - We could tap certain scientists on the shoulder for opportunities; not just make it an open call; mid-career faculty might be interested in different opportunities or trajectory and if they are put in an interdisciplinary team could be helpful – as opposed to open calls.
 - Tap on the shoulder? High up? Or even Department head level?
 - What are some intriguing big problems that we want to solve and address?
 - One-health is so huge, how specific can you focus?
 - Cannot bring people together without some work at the front end?

- Or – come to the team and make it competitive and make the pitch? They must be serious and have a vision? Commitment?
- Different approaches to recruitment?
- Is one-health to be too big to every be pre-eminent? What sub-topics are important to focus on of on-health? Is it human/animal? Is it environmental health and law?
- Part of this is about identify, so anyone can put themselves in this category. So, is it an exercise in identify?
- What is the problem to be solved and why is it a signature area for the U of S? We assume there is a problem to be solved. What is the purpose of the signature area? What are the opportunities in the signature area?
- Mingling minds program in COM could be a model to brings people together...to present their quick overview of research. A program that allows one to see how the research can fit into One Health model. Is there a way to focus down on what USask will do in this space?
- We need to get to know one another.
- Revisit the training programs that have been successful and have ended (CREATE) and expand them. It's too bad the One Health one here didn't go on. Once they end, what do you do? Need more than 5 years for such programs
- It would take: **resources**. Money at the end of the day from the Univ to support training programs, research chair allocations, startups and incentives. Strategic discussion. If the USask will not put, say, 20% of all new positions into this area, it will not achieve pre-eminence.
- Strategically, recruitment, training courses, degrees. Need a full commitment.
- We need degrees and training programs in the signature areas. We had a degree for One Health but it was not really ever awarded. Getting those degrees thru Council are lots of work.
- OVDR – 30K seed grants. Do something like this.?
- Interdisciplinary nature:
 - o ITRAP One Health. Vaccinology program: asked for the students to be co-supervised from two disciplines.
 - o This is a mechanism: purposefully bringing disciplines together.
 - o Joint seminar courses where you are exposed to other areas that aren't part of your core area. A broad survey course (legal, history, anthropology, immunology all related to vaccines.)
 - o The challenge at the time was for faculty from various depts there was no recognition of the credit to do teaching outside of the department
 - o Deans need to recognize cross-unit teaching and service.
- Force people in a gentle way -- make it mandatory to have groups from various disciplines.
- Start hiring people who are used to doing Team Science.
- Hepatitis C training program as an example of engagement of social sciences– we've got social sciences involved and getting the drugs to the people and community access. The value of that broad training is not quantifiable.
- The other central part is community. I always say yes to my communities and community partners: I am their people and they are my people. It is a sense of community and a real buy-in.
- institutional support in Signature Areas is lacking – if we want to build a Signature Area and make it well known around the world that we specialize in this area – need to start from grassroots level, with high school, undergraduate, and graduate students. Need to invest money into graduate research in those areas. Support those areas with scholarships, so we create that awareness, and start to build in that area.
- Should we fold non One Health issues into One Health banner? It doesn't fit there naturally, and there could be some pushback from the people that don't fit, but are being told to fit, but also take up on national/international stages. Not a lot of advantage taking away One Health, as it has been a successful signature area. Do we need another Health Signature Area?
- need formal metrics (objective measurements), and provide mentorship to grad students and early career researchers – eg – ITRAPP program (unsure of acronym – this was a One Health graduate training program, I believe) really engaged students in one level, but we don't have it anymore
- put money into Signature Areas – previously had CREATE grant for this, and ITRAPP
- need institutional support, matching funds

- Creating a network of One Health researchers across the University
- Generate a better definition of One Health that describes a clear goal (example: global water security is very descriptive and identifies a clear goal – this is not the case for the broad term of One Health and, therefore, doesn't seem to have much clout and makes it difficult for researchers to identify with it or see how they can fit in → create a name suggesting a vision!
- Create an inventory of everyone's skills e.g. 5 min presentations; gives attendees an opportunity to find collaborators
- If it's expected to become a main focus then resources need to be allocated to it.

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding USask's signature areas?

- Need signature area leaders. A point of contact for people to go to. Give everyone a better opportunity to collaborate on larger initiatives and grants.
- Somebody to take the helm- communication on and about signature areas, operations and strategy. A committee of leaders who meet regularly.
- Link research across the areas
- See what we have in terms of our "best kept secrets"
- Have done an excellent job in infrastructure development; we need to concentrate now more on the people who can utilize the infrastructure
- Siloed departmental structure - improve this structure
- Organize large research event for entire university (not siloed, as is the case now) - learnings from each other
- Establishment of communication channels among signature areas.
- Help in the identification of available funding and other resources to support research and faculty in order to gain national level recognition.
- Support and promote leadership for each signature area to bring institutional representation.
- Develop stronger partnerships, linkages and accesses with government (all levels), industries and end-user groups of the research and technology.
- Pick a few lanes, not 10. If you want pre-eminence and international recognition, back it up with resources. Right now, we do the easy thing by supporting all areas as opposed to doing the hard thing of picking just a few. Recognize that scientific enterprise has changed – build bridges with industry. That's where the \$\$ is. Need a better path for this development. One Health is too broad and on a continuum and not aligned. Public policy and medicine need to be connected, Different themes have to be connected under umbrella of One Health. Build bridges to what it takes to get a grant and what it takes to translate it to One Health. Both these concepts are not integrated.
- Need to communicate how to become pre-eminent – content and pipeline to show capacity and history to do the work. Build the story to get attention and content. Itrap can be stories USask can talk about.
- Protected time for faculty to do research – small window to figure out. Central VPR support for that protected time. Students need to have some place to go to work...every university is fighting the same battle, and students are our product, and they've got to work. Split between research faculty and teaching faculty - if units hire someone to take care of the lecture side of things, then people can spend that time for research.
- Important thing – we are not a copycat of a program. We need to make sure we stand out where we are strong and differentiated. We need to define where we are unique and where we can achieve excellence.
- Identified missing economists. Need a health economist, everyone needs one but difficult to get. Hire under - One Health USASK that they need to work as a team. If you don't go all in you will not get there.
- We were told that these signature areas would be fluid but not sure. Concerned about the lack of connectivity within Health research.
- Climate is so competitive for resources, worry about how we can inject energy to get people to buy into the concept.
- Structure – Signature area, Clusters and if you are outside as a researcher it is difficult to connect and contribute.
- Take what is important from One Health and rename and rebrand to make USASK unique.
- Better telling the story and successes we have had within and outside the

- Finding what I need is very difficult; not sure who USASK works with. In ON one health the Universities work together Guelph to Windsor.
- We have unique resources
- We have 7 health colleges on campus and the Vet College. We are one of three campus's in Canada that have a Vet College and we are all in the same University.
- Who is Leading One Health or who the leaders of One Health are? I don't who the leaders are for one health.
- The Health Science building was designed to drive informal interactions is that really working?
 - Leadership? How do we go forward in this signature area?
 - Do we need some priority areas within the one-health area?
 - We want to have impact on society.
 - The question is whether we would achieve the same successes without one-health as a signature area.
 - Biggest answer is communication, communication, communication. Strategic communication is not something that Senior Leadership has done well in this regard.
 - o We don't understand what it means to be a signature area.
 - o Everyone on campus should know what the signature areas, how we are doing in them.
 - o Do most faculty know anything about signature areas: how many we have, what they are, why we have them? We should explain the signature areas and find how they can participate.
- It's also about significant commitment from leadership to say "this is how we are committing to this growth. We are tying ourselves to the signature areas." It's the whole university (VPS, deans, associated deans) talking about the signature areas every chance we get.
- Move past the fear that people who aren't part of the signature area means that their work is not important.
- MCube grants – new ideas from three different college and each college matches budget. 100 grants in the first. No review.
- Break down the silos between disciplines, researchers, etc.
- Set real goals: goals and accountabilities. Signature areas should reports back to the whole university and report what they did, what they need, etc. There has been no follow-up.
- We need a plan for the signature areas so as to have coherence. What are the key elements of the signature areas? What are the goals we want to achieve? How will we know if we've met them. Who is accountable?
- Accountability needs to be there.
- If we are going to build a community let's get to know one another.
- Signature areas need a champion.
- Do we need fewer signature areas than 6?
- Rethink the signature areas: are they still meeting the needs? Are they still what our University wants to focus on? Is strong in?
- Signature Areas are siloed – we need more coordination across areas
- a lot of synergies between Signature Areas – can see this clearly in SAs like One Health, Indigenous Research
- a lot of things we are doing well, but not linking them – for example, pet CT imaging, Synchrotron, cyclotron. We are not capturing and linking them, maybe because we haven't had a champion to put them together and bring them forward
- look around our environment and see what we have
- we have done exceptionally well in research in the past 20 years – CLS, cyclotron, GIFS, GIWS – need to in the next 10 years concentrate more on **people** who can lead these areas
- we are still siloed into departmental structure – a new recruited person belongs to a department, expected to serve the department. There is no formal structure around Signature Areas or research teams. Tenure and promotion is still set in departments. What would a new recruited assistant professor think – that they need to get tenure, and there is no incentive to belong to a research team.
- We have different conferences internally – like the Life and Health Sciences Expo, and a separate One Health conference organized by students – wouldn't it be better to have a Signature Area conference with all 6 signature areas represented?
- Having more information (more specific examples) on the OVPR website about the signature areas, specifically about One Health and associated focus at UoS, would be beneficial to allow people to better identify themselves

- Amid COVID we as an institution has missed opportunities to tap into the wide of array of expertise at the U of S
- Would like to know what other activities are going on at the U of S.
- Potential for One Health initiatives in Saskatchewan will have broader global implications.
- One Health Commission (others globally) could be an opportunity to link with others involved in One Health globally. Locally, we had One Health public evening talks organized by WCVI.

Other

- We compared the pre-eminence success of the Agriculture and Water signature areas with that of One Health.
- We concluded that some of the successes of the Ag and Water signature areas arose from:
 - the distinct institutes associated with these 2 signature areas: and
 - the money and visibility of those instituteswhereas no such institute has been (yet) developed for One Health.
- Another discussion focussed on the different titles of the signature areas, namely “water security” or “food security” as being successful areas whereas there are no intrinsic goals associated with the name One Health. Perhaps need to rename and focus the very broad One Health concept to leverage our strengths in one or more of the component parts of One Health, eg. related to VIDO; maybe “infectious disease security” ?

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:03:14
IP Address: 24.138.9.123

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

Individuals have achieved pre-eminence in individual pillars of One Health, but there are very few who can claim to be pre-eminent in One Health.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

There needs to be a leader/champion who will bring different researchers together to present a unified thrust.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Put resources into them. Right now they're just boxes in UnivRS to be checked and have no real meaning.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 3:03:04 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 3:04:51 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:47
IP Address: 70.65.231.42

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

No evidence to support the claim. Individuals have been successful. The program has not.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Serious investment. Requires College of Medicine buyin. It's not there.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Revisit. Rethink. Redesign.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 3:18:48 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 3:24:11 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:23
IP Address: 128.233.11.165

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

No, while One Health has a strict definition, that definition is constantly undermined by inaccurate use of the term.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Forma, coordinated leadership. Not seed grants. If an area is a signature area, the existence of seed/pilot funding undermines the purported strength of the resarch area on campus.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Each area should develop a plan complete with accountabilities. If the leadership requires an unreasonable amount of additional administrative support to achieve these goals, another leader should be chosen. It should be a sought-after honor, with related commitment by the chosen leader. Not just another thing to line their CVs and that they pass off to others.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

The meeting was well done.

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 3:43:25 PM
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Time Spent: 01:10:40
IP Address: 70.64.36.175

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Strongly agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Strongly agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4
Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

We might have some pre-eminence in individuals areas within one-health, but not on intersected areas.

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

One-health awareness and communications to all levels of the employment and student groups on campus.
To let everyone knows what everyone is doing.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

For this and all signature areas, need more resources to highlighting too.

To promote and support having a champion for each of the signature areas to make movement and connects with other signature areas.

By establishing clear goals so everyone will understand how to fit in the signature area, anatomy doesn't know how to fit on it and for their students and faculty to succeed. One-Health umbrella.

Leadership, signature area representative to help to connect within and amongst signature areas.

More resources area needed not only for the research, but also for the establishment of channels of communications.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:30:30 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:31:38 PM
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IP Address: 158.51.52.169

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4 **Respondent skipped this question**

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

Q5 **Respondent skipped this question**

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

One thing that I did not mention was focusing on zoonosis as well as zooeyia (benefits of animals in human life).

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:50:13 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:53:26 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:13
IP Address: 207.47.175.228

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Faculty**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4 **Respondent skipped this question**

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

Q5
How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Our collective efforts need to be much more integrative and inclusive across thematic topics and disciplines.

Q6
What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Be careful promoting a social science signature area: it's a good idea and would be welcomed by many, but it could also send a signal that the social sciences aren't really welcome in the existing signature areas. Frankly, many social scientists believe this already so it would be all too easy to reinforce that impression.

Q7

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 12:19:36 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 12:26:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:59
IP Address: 70.64.12.115

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Disagree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

No - awareness wasn't achieved; clear strategy and metrics for development is not there; some disciplines under One Health is recognized and leading but not all; lack of active interactions among subjects

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Create a strong leadership team to provide more support and coordination;
Develop strategic plans with action items;
More communications and interactions among disciplines

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

There is no fundraising strategy and plan for our Signature Areas to help they achieve pre-eminence and awareness, particularly when university is entering a comprehensive campaign.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

It is a great session to have open discussions with faculty and staff. Thank you for arranging it.

#8

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 5:37:37 PM
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IP Address: 67.225.113.30

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1

Staff

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3

Respondent skipped this question

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

Feel like that is a very broad question. In that case, perhaps not. However, working in Animal Care I see alot of crossover with human and animal research and feel it is blending quite well. I am more hopeful for out future with the One Health approach.

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

This is kind of a Utopian idea: If all research and departments were not categorized. If researchers could have the freedom and security to move out of their area if it leads them on a tangent idea. Example: biologist studying an animal species leads to studying the forage this animal survives on leads to the environmental impact on this forage leads to land management... I feel this freedom to shift research will develop a more rounded research community that feel secure in collaborating with each other and not feel threatened that they will lose their position in their department if they don't stick to "their" subject.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

Thank you for your inclusion of all to participate.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, May 14, 2021 9:07:08 AM
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Time Spent: 00:22:52
IP Address: 128.233.11.5

Page 1: Intstructions

Q1 **Staff**

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Q2 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Q3 **Agree**

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

As was mentioned in our particular discussion what is the metric for pre-eminence? Further, given that multi-disciplinary nature of the area this seems an extremely hard thing to determine.

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

More inter-communication regarding One Health projects would be extremely helpful. Funds to specifically support clear One Health type projects would also be useful. Achieving strength in these things isn't free.

Q6 **Respondent skipped this question**

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

Overall I didn't like the breakout group format and felt said discussions were a waste and easily derailed. The group I was in for example spent the entire time on if we'd achieved pre-eminence and little to no time on any other issue other than complaints about time and mid to later career researchers (i.e. themselves)

#10

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 2:26:51 AM
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Page 1: Intstructions

Q1

What is your role at the University of Saskatchewan?

Other (please specify):

Research Scientist, Jarislowsky Chair in Biotechnology

Q2

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan's signature area strategy has been successful?

Disagree

Q3

To what extent do you agree that the University of Saskatchewan has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? (One Health)

Disagree

Q4

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in the One Health signature area? Why or why not?

I don't think there is enough communication back to researchers. We are limited by who we know is working in a "One Health" area. It is difficult to assess whether we have achieved pre-eminence because there is no institutional level communication about who has been successful in the area of One Health

Q5

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?

Right now, when we submit a grant through the UNIVRS system, we determine if it fits within one of the University's signature areas - I usually tick this box off for One Health because my research fits in this area. My recommendation - when a researcher ticks off the "One Health" box as part of the UNIVRS process, they are automatically enrolled or contacted if they are successful with their grant application - A Lay Summary for the successful grant could be provided by each researcher and these go into a "One Health" directory. These lay summaries would be compiled and made available to any researchers across campus who are interested in One Health. This is an easy way for us to know who else is working in One Health, what their research is about, and whether they could be someone to collaborate with in the future.

Q6

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan's signature areas?

We need to have a One Health liaison to communicate with researchers and bring them together. This could include virtual symposia each year - rotate speakers each year from all different areas of research.

Q7

Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding the One Health Signature Area engagement meeting that was held on May 7, 2021.

I thought the design of the meeting was excellent. The groups were small enough that each person was able to give their opinion as well as ask questions.

General Signature Area Engagement

May 17, 2021

Breakout Room Summary

What would you change about USask's existing signature areas, if anything?

- Suggest one health is not inclusive enough need to either broaden the scope or more appropriately we should perhaps discuss having a 'new' health sciences signature area.
- Some of the signatures are very narrow but also there are lots of research clusters
- Find some way to retain area that are already working in silos. Should signature areas be 'owned' by institutes etc this makes it very inclusive. There are also bridges across these.
- Some signatures are doing well. Challenge to create institutes, such as energy
- 10 years ago when setting up signature areas were supposed to be fluid and flexible, but this does not seem to have happened.
- Each area needs a leader
- Needs a renewal document. Successes, challenges, changes to the landscape, what is their own perspective
- Need leader, faculty base, and support
- Disagrees that a leader is needed. Most cutting edge discoveries are serendipitous and does not need leadership.
- Areas need to be re-articulated, especially One Health
- What are the purposes of the signature areas? We should redefine this.
- Prioritizing opportunities for interdisciplinary interactions. e.g. Climate Change?
- Budget challenges should be acknowledged- are we in for 5 years of retrenchment? What possibilities are there for renewal?
- Do we like the areas we have, do we know what they are? Do we find them inclusive? Tend to be more natural science sides. Less of a fit for the social sciences side.
- Dr. Chad report on signature areas – areas hadn't well engaged the social sciences/humanities. This clearly needs to be addressed.
- Social science – is there an area (e.g. community based research) that would be inclusive/all encompassing?
- Initiative in publicly engaged scholarship as important for USask. Report – round 1 consultations has gone to the president. Well over 100 faculty members engaged... strong current towards introducing it as a signature area. All can engage with need to explain/communicate research to the public.
- If a new area is introduced will another leave.
- What are the areas for? Create an envelop for all we do? Do we try to encompass everyone, or is the intent to ID specific areas of strength or where we want to grow? Is the intent to foster an area? Or classify research across campus.
- Not a strong sense that the areas are emerging out of demonstrated strength. No targeted scholarships, no concentration of resources. Need for more support/fostering..
- Chairs?
- One health – seems to exclude many in Medicine.
- What is the point/value? Without leadership and resources in the areas, what is the point? What is the university going to do to reinforce/grow research in the signature areas?
- Have we been successful in the previous/existing areas?
- What are we known for Ag, synch? Beyond?
- What has all the point of the areas been? Do we need them?
- Ag is long-standing and related to our identity. For the others, things are less clear.
- What will happen with new areas? Will they simply be a page on the website or will they grow?

- Do we need six areas? More? Less?
- Fundraising – the signature areas should be important to structuring/targeting donations. If these are our signature areas we need more strategy/action behind fund raising. Strategy could be better aligned with areas.
- Areas are not inclusive. Took areas to be areas one should try to pivot into. But no support to do so. Need for supports including financial support. Eventually stopped paying attention to them. For some they have become check boxes but there is not substantial engagement in them.
- Aligning with signature area is advantageous, at least superficially. For many they have no consequence other than to exclude. By definition they seem exclusive – excluding some.
- University needs all kinds of scholars – not just those in signature areas... so this approach can disenfranchise, unless they are so broad to be meaningless.
- focusing resources in one area means leaving out another
- Some grant types is an issue – CFI and Canada Research Chairs. In these grants you need to align with strategic institutional goals – including demonstrated resources..
- All inclusive vs. focused? If focused – how do you not create haves and have nots?
- Some people want to fit in better but there is no leader/leadership – pathway to develop the areas...
- Champions/facilitators for the areas...
- Having strong leadership in each area is important: someone or a group to identify relevant faculty and connect parties who wouldn't normally work with one another or identify with a Signature Area.
- Existing Signature Areas came to be through a rigorous process, but their existence seems to be open ended. There should be a call for renewal plans that highlight wins (small and big), challenges faced, and how the research landscape has changed. In particular, the response to the renewal call should address why the Signature Area should continue to be maintained.
- I don't necessarily want further "leadership" for a Signature Area. Researchers can identify collaborations for themselves. These come about organically and serendipitously.
- The current budget crisis makes renewal and questions of the success of existing areas especially important. Can we afford to reinvigorate existing areas and create new ones at the same time? I would hate to think that we might not be able to sponsor new areas because the budget crisis means we can only support existing ones.
- CLS, Global Food Security
- Imaging/diagnostics – molecular diagnostic out of Cancer Centre, CLS, entire array of things in imaging.
- Computer science supports data in GWF (Water Security) and in Agriculture – these are both significant signature areas.
- Much is happening with applied data science – but do not think that is captured at the U of S; indigenous research is strong and emphasized at the U of S.
- Lack of giving new faculty and students to these signature areas, need strategy and communication.
- Water science, food security and agriculture science, and VIDO Intervac;
- Our Sustainable Development Goals (we are ranked 96 in the world in over 1100 universities in the world), so SDG could be integrated into all of us of research areas.
- One Health is a unique idea but has not worked like One Health in other Universities; internationally and we have not done enough (much) to promote internally on campus, to the community and to other Universities.
- Data science – is growing and has the potential for unifying a lot of research on campus, there are new applied data science grad programs, there are potentials for tapping into funding nationally (NDRIO – for data commons, justice, medicine etc.)
- Perceived strength is Indigenous, but it more perceived than actual/realized – it is not clear if we are talking about in this area, is it research? Or is it about recruitment, retention, student success, community outreach and engagement, it is about on-boarding faculty and staff? All these things are

important, and can reinforce each other, but understanding how to incorporate research utilizing indigenous knowledge, is important.

- Crop Science and Plant Genomics, Animal Health (Agriculture, Vet School and VIDO), infectious Disease area (it might be built into One health), and Water Safety and Water Health.
- Relationships with Corrections Services of Canada is unique, potential for more and continued interdisciplinary research in this area.
- Minerals and Mining – we are good at this particularly when it comes to cleaning up mine sites; lots of insight to Oil Sands in Alberta (ESG and sustainable mining for net zero) and environment is part of that.
- Water – agriculture and mining needs, food production and water management are important – it is Water, Soil and Air management.
- One Health – needs some changing – one signature area more inclusive to health sciences researchers – health sciences signature area might be in order. Either broaden the scope of One Health, or reimagine – if we only talk about 6 areas – and many health clusters – hard to describe to. What about human health? Fit with One Health – a bit of a stretch
- Energy and Mineral Resources – very narrow in scope – maybe renew energy – policy and practice
- Changing existing signature areas -- how to bridge them – operating in silos – especially around water, agriculture, energy (Paris Accord – need to be more visible nationally and internationally). Challenges with 6-7 different forms of energy – airline industry. Huge opportunities in this energy sector.
- For example – do the signature areas need to be defined or owned by institutes or centres – if not part of the institute how to we build and promote them?
- Originally to be fluid and flexible and not forever.
- Where does climate change fit? Planetary health? SK – number 2 in the world of CO2 emissions. Looking at energy intensive – Food – energy being transferred here? How can these sectors be more complementary
- New Sustainability Strategy – thus the UN 17 SDGs (2030 agenda) – and tie it to the university strategy highlight what the world needs. Research goals of the strategy? How do we put a sustainability lens on research? Fund? Are they related? Where does human health fit? Etc.
- 17 goals – 6 transformations – groups the 17 goals (Jeffrey Sacks). Can we make our campus -- zero emissions? can garbage be produced into energy?

1) Public Health

- a. Several issues in Public Health are potentially the result of the built environment. Lack of a feeling of “community” or “support” may be the result of cities and developers designing cities for cars rather than people and concentrating on maximizing financial returns per front foot of lot rather than focussing on people

2) Energy

- a. We have a unique energy situation
 - i. We have a harsh climate that allows us to do “cold regions” research that could help many regions in the world
 - ii. We have an opportunity as we are in a windy area with the most hours of sunshine in Canada
 - iii. We have a distributed energy need

3) Value added processing

- a. We have an opportunity to lead in sustainable food supplies and healthy food supplies
 - i. People want to know where their food comes from
 - ii. We have opportunities in regenerative agriculture

- iii. We have opportunities to lead in the area of converting non-edible grass to high concentration protein through sustainable beef production

4) Data Science

- a. Smart Cities, Smart Farms, Smart Grids, Distance Medicine etc all require four things
 - i. Sensors – real time sensing
 - ii. Communication – data transfer and security
 - iii. Analytics – big data, Ai and decision supports
 - iv. Controls – convert the decisions to an adjustment in the system or recommendation to a patient

5) Knowledge Mobilization

- a. Entrepreneurship
- b. Start ups
- c. How can we “put the knowledge at the University into the hands of the people(s) of Saskatchewan” (USask Foundational Documents)
- d. Our job is discovery and innovation but there is a gap between that and marketing

6) Indigenous

- a. The Impact Assessment Act (2019) indicates “*Whereas the Government of Canada recognizes that impact assessments provide an effective means of integrating scientific information and Indigenous knowledge into decision-making processes related to designated projects;*”
 - i. Leading developers will be looking for ways to “integrate scientific information with Indigenous knowledge”
- b. Indigenous communities are wanting to develop “communities” and the federal government keeps building urban subdivisions
 - i. It is likely that what Indigenous peoples see has “healthy communities” could be reflected in community designs for our urban centres

• Strengths

- Imaging and diagnostics
- P2RC and GWIS
 - Water and ag
- Applied data science
- Indigenous research
- Strengths in many areas by lack of communication, promotion and access for young scientists to all the resources
 - Water
 - Food security
 - VIDO
 - SDG work - ranked 96 in the world
- Strength of numerous diverse colleges that could work together
- Crop science and genetics
- Animal Health
- Infectious Disease (one Health)
- Water Security

• Improvement

- One health - potential but needs more
- Perceived strength in Indigenous - needs clarity, no plan
- Largest collection of health science colleges in Canada and we're not taking advantage
- Big opportunity for interdisciplinary research in the health sector
- Need to have a better tie to the Provincial Growth Plan and Provincial priorities

- Emerging Strength or opportunity
 - VIDO InterVac - human disease control
 - Data Science and analytics
 - Food and water
 - Public Health - One Health - research center
 - Mineral and resource
 - Green energy
 - Alignment with the Saskatchewan Growth Plan?
 - Reduction of victimization
 - Reduce the number of offenders
 - Social environment
 - Mental health
 - Indigenous Health
 - Opportunity developed by diverse backgrounds working together
 - Public Health is opportunity
 - We didn't live up to the One Health opportunity
 - Public Health should bring all the Colleges together under an umbrella - build on our strength of numerous Colleges
 - Food Security
 - Technical
 - Social - how do we provide access to new technologies.
 - Energy
 - Value Added Processing
 - Cold Regions everything
 - "Healthy Communities"

- Ensure that the signature areas are inclusive enough that everyone feels they fit somewhere within one or more areas
- The field of water is broader than “water security” at USask – one member spoke about her research which is on water and health
- Not all my research fits under water security but a water researcher – fits under multiple as well Indigenous, one-health
- Sustainability is missing or needs to be added. We have sustainable development goals, PAWS conference that exemplify the broadness and how this cuts across so many other areas such as Agriculture, energy, water, Indigenous peoples
- Sustainability is most closely connected with environment – but cuts across so many areas
- Sustainability ties across many of the existing themes. Not combining but identifying that as a cross cutting weave is good.
- Water security is too narrow, and sustainability more broadly describes research in these areas
- Researchers in the area of accounting find it difficult to understand where their research fits – may fit some aspects of areas but not all
- One group member commented that their research doesn’t fit any of the current signature areas – not directly but can indirectly contribute to a number of areas such as Indigenous peoples (community focus), one-health area (nature of the research)
 - i.e., Not a good fit with one, but associated with several areas in some way
- Need better communication of what is happening in many of these areas to help us understand how well the current areas are working

- Need to create synergies between signature areas – more important than the signature areas themselves
 - Within or across a couple areas
 - Should be more about cross cutting, not about silos
- Some researchers would hate to identify their research just for the sake of doing it.
 - Hard to fit into boxes.
- It's about teaching, learning, institutes, weaving and creating this branding that has to be a benefit of signature areas, coalescing all the work we do at the university. We need to be outward looking – people need to see us as leaders in these areas and also provides space, shouldn't be an exclusive arena for some and not others
- We need to demonstrate impact
- Food security vs food safety and health. Farm to fork food safety and production in both livestock and plant research on campus needs to be considered. Current food security work is entirely crop focused.
- We need broad areas so we are recognized or identify with those areas
- We need to be confident in what we have and language to describe them is inclusive
- One-health – includes patient-oriented research, POR could be identified on its own, including community aspect
 - Hard to fit POR into the one-health
- Group agreed that this has the same issue as water and needs to be broader
- One health definitely overlaps with water/food and environment.
- One-health area seems to be limiting more and more – in some groups it's viewed as exclusive to only those working across the three areas → human, animal and environment. So much so that people don't feel they fit this area if they only work across two themes
 - Should be about not excluding one element but shouldn't have to include all three
- Important to define signature areas
- Important for newer faculty is how they shape their research. New scholars are trained in a certain way with methodologies, and areas of research. How do we encourage them to bridge the gap, motivated and confident in developing research in these areas, especially when there isn't a good fit.
- Big problems are interdisciplinary
- Question: What is the purpose of the signature areas and who are they for? Are signature areas for internal or external stakeholders?
 - What is the purpose of sig areas – do they need to be broad enough for everyone to fit, or specific so some things fit, what is the purpose?
- Need to see it as a process and development to be a successful academic institution
- Training and HQP as important aligned with these areas
- Bring research into classroom and classroom into community
- Researchers in health fields have a hard time fitting into one-health or one area
- Are we missing a signature area that would better cover nursing and medicine?
- Clarification provided: Looking to identify some areas to focus on and putting resources into those areas in order to advance that area. If we are going to have signature areas, we need defined leadership and investment in that area (funding to support graduate students)
- POR fits within one-health but need more opportunities for medicine and nursing – all health sciences
- patient/community oriented research also applies to vet med
- Linking teaching, research and signature areas – feed off each other
- When you're talking about self-funding – saw it with NCEs, it's not long enough for entities to become self-sustained
- Change in funding inclusivity – take advantage of the signature areas. If we change the signature areas too quickly could be problematic

- Principles as fundamental structures that drive an organization, research needs to be based on these same principles
- USask will become more visible because of vibrancy and continuity, may not have edge of competitiveness that other U15s do. How can we become known, reputation for x,y,z in research and infrastructure, faculty HQP, staff, research outputs and impacts
- Signature areas draw people to USask – a faculty member doing work in water related health, came to USask because of the reputation and expertise.
- Resources dedicated to the signature areas – it will be more important to see the fit and impact.
- Opportunities between the spaces that will be beneficial. We are getting larger research network and partnership grants. Seeing tri-councils coming together. Being able to work across these areas as important.
- If we have too many or no areas – become a “jack of all trades and a master of none”.
- There will be research for the sake of research, but how do we realize that impact beyond the traditional way
- What is the purpose of signature areas?
- Signature areas can play a role, have to be both internal and external
- Being the university the world needs - asking important, global questions
- Patient / community oriented research is critical to meeting the needs of Saskatchewan. Being the university the world needs is important. But we are the only ones to meet the needs of the people of Saskatchewan and that can't be lost. Just because research isn't on the international stage doesn't make it less important - and I worry that gets lost sometimes in the university communications and often tri council funding focus.
- As a junior faculty member – most of the signature areas are not the clearest fit
- Being faculty from a professional school we have to cover a lot/we train a future of accountants CPAs, not fully engaged in signature areas
- Signature areas are a good way for university to present our strengths to external stakeholders
- Many faculty continue to do their discipline-based research which is also important in an academic institution

We should clarify the intent/purpose of the areas. We should communicate clearly about the areas to all researchers on campus.

- Why were signature areas identified? What was the goal/objective?
- What measures can we/should we be measuring the success of the signature areas?
- Why are we doing this review?
 - The current areas are not inclusive
 - We need clarity on the objective of identifying areas, this might help us to understand why the current areas are restrictive, narrow
- Signature Areas do speak to external audiences; they signal areas of expertise, focus
 - However, the areas don't seem to be playing the role that they could/should
 - Being clear about what we want these signature areas to do will help us to measure whether they are successful
- We do not communicate well about the areas – many faculty, students do not know much about the areas; we need to do a better job of telling our own researchers about the areas (Janet).
- The most direct connection some of us have with the areas is when we submit grant applications and we are asked to choose the area that best corresponds to the grant application
- Artistic practice nor imaginative practices are never mentioned in the signature area. Social and artistic impacts in that.

- Peter MacKinnon called a meeting many years ago and announced that USask was going to become a science and technical university. So the social scientists scrambled to try and fit in/find their place This was never explicitly said again. The signature areas reflect the vision of USask to be a science and technological
- CRC and none of my research lies in the signature areas; so I struggle to align myself with something that is identified as important to USask.
- A better articulation or conversation about expectations of signature areas; does anyone know how those areas are defined or who the signature areas are for. My frustration is in the ability to fit in.
- I'm frustrated is about why do we have to fit into a signature area? I have to fit into their concept of what research is: why do I have to mold my research around the life and physical sciences instead of pursuing what I am interested in?
- Can I be recognized for what I want to pursue in terms of research?
- It's hard to try and fit into a research definition.
- COM perspective: only option is One Health and even then it's a bit dodgy: we are meant to conduct not only research with animals that are at the interface of human health. What about a signature area that speaks to the area of human health: what about taking things from molecular level to humans.
- Why do we have signature areas? Part of it is how the outside
What does the U strategically want to develop into areas where the world recognizes us as the leader or emerging area.
- Lots of reports on One health but nothing done and as such One Health is a catch all.
- USask is a very inward-looking institution and we need to change this.
- I would dump all of the signature areas and start from scratch. Some you will find on the list again but others, no.
- No assessment or evaluation of any of the signature areas and whether they are taking us to the goal of being the U the world needs.
- One Health It's not shared what the explanation of what the interface of animal-human-enviro. So do I belong to this signature as a cancer researcher? I also always pick "none" when asked about signature areas. Need more clarity on One Health and whether it belongs to human health or not.
- How do Signature Areas help with individual research? If I do research in a Signature Area, will the University fund more in those areas?
- There should be a clear understanding of what it means for the faculty to be in a signature area. Right now there is an attitude of "who cares" and that's not good.
- We need a strategy for signature areas and definitions of what they mean, what it means to be involved, and how we know we are making progress towards the goals. How do we measure the success?
- So many iterations of areas of strength, signature areas, etc. It has to be clear. It is hard to identify "is this Aboriginal Health orientated"? Well hopefully my work will relate to all. There needs to be some guidelines.
- People need a place to land. It would be very helpful to know are these truly the areas where we have expertise that we are highlighting? Where we are investing to become the best? (these are different!)
- The investment paths to get something to ramp up versus to grown and already known strengths are quite different.
- Investments are lacking.
- I would love it if the COM had a place to land in our areas of strength.
- Will these Signature Areas be there forever? If you are pre-eminent, you don't need signature areas to be pre-eminent.
- There should be turnover of signature areas.
- Need clear goals and objectives and to review them?

- I think we need signature areas; we can just ditch some that you are really, really good at because it won't do any harm to them.
- No current investment going into these signature areas right now anyway.
- U should make a plan around investment: are we bringing more people to work in these areas?
- Surface what Signature Areas means to the University Community
- Do we have Signature Areas to grow and become the best or to tell the world we have already achieved pre-eminence. This is the question the U really needs to understand and answer before we even decide if we need new signature areas.
- COM has recently looked at impact and research productivity. Use this to identify areas of strength and further growth if invest in it.
- I love the fact that this conversation is happening. I love meeting new people who I don't know and learn about their work.
- Baljit is trying to open lines of communication and that will only benefit all of us.
- Maybe we have to know more about what research is actually happening here at the University.
- Identify complementary skills that may need to naturally forming collaborations.
- One thing that should come out of this is to find out what is going on here at the University: it will help people grow their list of collaborators, etc.
- To establish signature areas you have to know what is going on,
- Signature Areas need leadership: to govern the signature areas. All in the group agreed.
- Dennis Johnson: there was a call to put together a multi-disciplinary multiyear research program. Took a leadership role, put a call across campus: whose doing work in this area? Who wants to? Self selection in and out until a core team was left, put in a proposal, got the money, spent the money. UofR built upon this; USask let it die.
- With leadership, vision and participatory involvement with researchers, you can mobilized a lot of talent across this campus. We have a lot of talent. Leadership: bringing vision, mobilizing people, assessing whether we reach our goals.
- Too much of the university is left out.
- We can develop a signature area which includes all researchers.
- Priority areas:
 - Human Health
 - Publicly Engaged Scholarship
 - Quantum Innovation
 - Breaking Boundaries (?)
- we need to form a committee to investigate the efficiency and provides data and analyse the data on current investment in these strategic areas. Has developing signature areas actually been successful?
- Seems like just a check-off on a rubric.
- What is the budgetary impact of those signature areas? Is it just an acknowledgement or are there real \$\$ impacts? What is the relationship between the Usask signature areas and budgets.
- Signature areas are important because it is important on how we project ourselves to campus and the public community.
- In England, there are "Transformations". Brings in so many cross-disciplinary areas.
- Re-think what a signature area is. What is an area which all of us are doing?
- Excellence should be the priority. Therefore, what is the new area?
- Many important areas already have been addressed over decades but left out:
 - Social Issues
 - Racism
 - Sexism
 - Housing and Homelessness

- Humanities are just not represented.

There is a lot of expertise in these areas but no where to be seen in the signature areas.

- Danger to look for new and emergent areas.
- Need to re-think knowledge economies...and for whom?
- One Health—need to go beyond this.
- Embarrassing that since we are one of the top 15...nothing on Health. No box we can even check off on the signature areas. Disturbing and affects how some of us can attract funding. If this were university-wide, then we would do better. Then it would be a way that many areas can focus on. Lots of investment already.
- Another suggestion for cross-disciplinary signature area: Climate Change
- Quantum Innovation...development of quantum computers (superfast computers).
- Need more data to make decisions---how has this impacted # postdocs, grad students, funding, etc.
- *One health* idea is too restrictive. Everyone likes to see themselves in these areas. Broaden to **health** as a topic – it would include animal, human etc., but it won't have to include more than one at the same time.
- Improve communication about these areas. What's happening within those areas right now? What kinds of things are going on in the signature areas aside from what you may have been focused on in the past?
- Identify core people for each research so we can reach out to them and create a more collaborative environment. Identify subject matter experts.
- Directly link fundraising to signature areas.
- Link to government relations and SAR.
- Research priorities, guiding document to inform partners of people and resource capacities.
- General public needs to understand why and how these signature areas matter. We shouldn't only speak to ourselves, we need to speak with stakeholders, audiences, investors, general public, etc. Show relevance of these SAR.
- Better Communication about what is going on in the signature areas throughout campus and to the community.
- Design and assessment of the 3-year rolling plan: Active plan with 3 (a small number of) consistently changing priorities. Has action items and clear goals and modifiable to change each year as needed.
- Linkages to Fundraising: how to link subject matter core to fundraising with the signature areas and work being done. Connect experts with potential collaborations and programs.
- Connection of fundraising with signature areas.
- Need to better link government relations and fundraising to our signature areas. A university strategic plan might help to link the university and research signature areas together.
- Broadening a Health signature area beyond One Health with many felt was restrictive of some excellent researchers. One Health is too restrictive – this Echoes John Gordon's points.

What new or emerging areas could USask adopt as a signature area?

- need to look at planetary health / climate change ect how does this fit.
- University approved sustainability strategy; Aspirational goals high level. How do you put this lens on research? There are 6 transformations which overlap the signature areas. Humanities not well represented in the signature areas.
- Review the existing areas and areas on campus that compliment but which are not currently engaged.
- Is aboriginal signature area properly thought out? Is it a pillar rather than a signature area, and should be woven through all we do at the institution. It is fundamental to all the signature areas.
- These should be 5 years investments. When do we decide to end an area? 3 of 6 are natural resources.

- Need to think about humanities and uplift this into a signature area.
- Is native law centre a research identity?
- How do we weave in all the college levels research focuses, the HS research clusters, and signature areas all together?
- Theme of change and innovation should be considered.
- Quality of life; for individual, for communities etc. health and environment could be a new area
- Not convinced that signature areas are involved when complement planning, engineering it is.
- Social sciences, humanities and liberal arts –
- Climate Change
 - But this might be a “fad”
 - Others disagree
- Quantum Innovation
 - Brewing from different corners of our campus
 - Unique expertise and critical mass
 - Federal government announced quantum innovations as priority
 - Alignment and capitalization of priorities
- Redefining e.g. health where we have leading medical historians and hemdical anthropologists
 - Perhaps split off infectious diseases including VIDO etc.
 - History, CoM,
- Broaden other disciplines to include a range of topics including energy history, water security of history
- Q about One Health
 - Breakout room mainly WCVM - should One Health should be broken up – adamant that the answer is no
 - Intent is to split the One Health, recognizing that there are many others that could be under that – History of Medicine, etc.
- publicly engaged scholarship
- Climate Change should be a Signature Area. It is a global problem that we have unique expertise for here at USask.
- The Social Sciences and Humanities need a Signature Area. Many people from these areas are excluded by the Signature Areas at the moment.
- I echo these thoughts. In addition, Quantum Innovation is a research area with critical mass at USask (e.g. the quanTA Centre). Quantum materials, quantum computing, and quantum sensing are breakthrough technologies with many experts here bringing these to life. Quantum Innovation also enjoys applications to health-related problems (e.g. quantum algorithms for protein folding and drug design). Quantum science in general has been prioritized by the Federal Government, who will distribute nearly 400M CAD over the next 5 years to universities and start-ups to dedicate to quantum research. A Signature Area in Quantum Innovation is a way to align with this prioritization.
- I agree with a focus on quantum technologies. This would capture a lot of nearby work, not only in new technologies for medicine but also in areas such as nuclear physics. I should add that I disagree with singling out Climate Change as a Signature Area. Climate Change is important, but a better and more expansive area would be "Biodiversity".
- I would also like to redefine One Health. I would like to broaden it to be more inclusive of other types of research. I would perhaps split off VIDO and Vet Med into a continuation of the past One Health. In general, we also have to ask what are the funding opportunities here. What resources are in place at the institutional, regional, and national level for financing these areas.
- Largest number of health science disciplines on the entire campus, and we do not take advantage of that. One Health might capture that, but we have a great untapped resource to collaborate with the medicine, nursing, physiotherapy, pharmacy, vet med, kinesiology etc.

- One Health – we have not quite figured out; the VIDO/ interact – Vet med side has worked, but we have not captured the human health component in a way that we might imagine.
- Data Science – and we are emerging; all disciplines that exist and emerging. All disciplines need data scientists.
- Community and Health area good future opportunity.
- Food and Water.
- Public Health – maybe it does not have to be blended into VIDO or One Health (note we have Community health and epidemiology).
- Possible Pandemic Health.
- Mining and Sustainable Development.
- Energy or renewable or sustainable energy.
- Mining and Energy.
- Data management and analysis.
- Research that operationalizes the diversity of the students that we have.
- Reduction of Victimization (trauma-informed, criminal offenders’ reductions – so improving health, social context, mental health supports, additions etc. – so community determinants of health). We also have a level 4 Correction Services of Canada facility on our land, and we have a great opportunity to invest in anything to reduce victimization.
- Indigenous health - looking at the social determinants of health, and how to support the mental and physical health of indigenous people through important supports and interventions.
- Recruitment of people from diverse environments.
- Public Health – we can grow and play a longer-term role; we are more critical of the One Health initiative – we did not live up to the potential and name “One Health” is old and overused – the newer term is actually - “Public Health” and there are a lot of aspects – it can be international/global, underserved communities. The initial vision for the School of Public Health (Bruce Reeder) had that in mind. There were 19 different colleges that were intended to be interdisciplinary, and that vision is where we can significantly grow and build. (So, might it be a re-invigorating this? Or as part of the JSGS school of public policy?)
- Are there areas in the Provincial strategic objectives?
- International Vaccination – how does Global access to new technologies facilitated – maybe use Food technology as the starting point, and then bringing in other technologies.
- Community planning? We build homes, not communities; this is both in new subdivisions and on-reserve.
- Energy – particularly if we are looking at SMART grid technology (which means sensors to measure in real time, data security and transmission, data analysis (big data analytics), communication back to the patient.
 - The four things are sensors, data transmission, data analysis/analytics and then communication back (in all areas, medicine, water, mining, etc.)
- Sustainable and value- added food supplies and value added processing, and healthier foods; we have potential for concentrated nutrient.
- Indigenous knowledge into developments at the front stage (mining, etc.) – an opportunity in agriculture; healthy community – and indigenous knowledge could help us do that.
- How does the Indigenous Signature Area fit as a signature area – what is it? What is the signature? It is a pillar of the university – part of all that we do throughout the university. Indigenous – needs to be integrated into everything that we do – Not sure how it is a signature area of research
- Transformation areas helps us mover forward – do they need to be 10 year investments? Five years? Do we have the strength? Three areas we specialize in relates to natural resources.

- How do we recognize the fine arts and humanities – how do we move the needle to do something around this as a signature area – how to advance?
 - One Health? Is there more opportunity to tie into the strength emerging related to the new pediatric hospital?
 - Where areas are we preeminent in? What is a health science signature area? Research clusters? Specialites? If we need more signature areas – how do we decide what they are?
 - Signature Areas – very subject focused versus innovations or change – move from a subject matter to a process focus.
 - One health could be enhanced to have more strength in research in health – quality of life for children and their families and communities --
 - How do signature areas facilitate complement planning? Do we hire re: our signature areas? University's signature areas?
 - When we talk about driving innovation – fundamental, applied, and clinical – How to position Canada as a leader.
 - Patient and Community oriented research is an emerging theme.
 - Sustainability as a cross cutting theme rather than a direct area but each element or signature area should consider sustainability or is a stream under each
 - Economic development could be a signature area and spans a number of the existing areas and is important – doesn't have to be viewed from a narrow financial aspect – broaden, other factors that contribute to economic development
 - What makes a person healthy – cuts across so many areas including economic development, food security, water security, etc.
 - Amendment to that idea: “Economic and social development” is what we're really talking about
- Collaboration at USask is a key strength (part of the Prairie Ethos). We should build on this and ensure that one or more of the signature areas is one that excites everyone on campus.*
- We would like to see a theme, or themes, that would encompass the entire campus. There is a strong sense of collaboration on campus and a theme that could unite would be well received. A theme could unite a wide-range of diverse disciplines. E.g. the origins of disease.
 - Broad, encompassing themes can be very useful at uniting
 - The USask culture of collaboration is not easily replicated in institutions; we should capitalize on this internal strength when developing signature areas
 - Does research collaboration on campus need support?
 - Mingling Minds in the College of Medicine addresses this – takes on the task of creating a catalogue of who is doing what at USask, makes available to researchers This type of a program would be important to have at a USask-level
 - Our smaller size can be used to our advantage – it is easier for researchers across campus to meet and interact with each other than at larger institutions.
 - We need to ensure that some of our areas/themes have broad interest to multiple disciplines (Alan). We need to click on ideas that excite everyone in the university.
- Consider areas of responsibility*
- In addition to areas of strengths, we should also consider our areas of responsibilities
 - We could focus on the importance of child and youth development
 - When we care for children and youth, we are interested in the long-term health; many chronic diseases have their origins in childhood and youth

- The university should be thinking about the economic importance of these areas in addition to the societal and health/well-being.
- Do sign areas have to be so distinct? Could it be more “Imagination and Memory”: 3D imaging in terms of anatomy, in movement, somatics and infertility.
- Interesting to have a signature area that is more vast in focus and title. Creating interD and multi disciplinary avenues of approachability and opportunity.
- Ongoing assessment of signature areas; not just a episodic assessment.
- To answer this question, I need to know what the current signature areas that exist comprise because they are too vague and unclear. Difficult to think about what is new and emerging because maybe we are not understanding the current signature areas
- Question of whether to have arts/humanities in all of the signature areas or having a Signature Area around Fine Arts/Humanities.
 - I’d like a SA focus on arts and humanities; it would be more interesting.
 - There doesn’t need to be a singular strategy with signature area. We could do both.
- Academics can do what they want and it doesn’t matter if I fit in (though this is different depending on your career stage). If you do what you want, its good quality, your career won’t be hurt if you don’t fit into a signature area.
- The Signature Areas aren’t really real for the majority of faculty members in Arts and Science.
- If Univ wants the Signature Areas to be real, they need to address these concerns.
- Are signature areas just a marketing tool for international and global purposes?
- I’ve not seen an attempt to create a platform for interaction; this is sad.
- We need to know who does what.
- Atlantic Defense Summit and what they do is once a year they bring researchers who get 5 mins each: what you are interested in, what projects you are doing/find most interesting. Quick way to intro one to another. Gives an overview of what people are doing and if you are looking for particular collaborations it gives you a sense. I would love to participate in something like this with Medical Sciences and on this campus just generally.
- AI – creating new industries and breaking the mold. Computer science.
- In cancer space (fine detail and molecular docking uses AI. Haven’t found a good connection with AI.
- Need a person who has foot in biology and
- Bioinformatics, big data, AI, software development.
- Precision medicine, use bioinformatics data to align with specific treatments.
- Saskatoon has been the developing ground for lots of tech startups, e.g Skip the Dishes, Vendasta, Coconut Calendar, etc. Some of these have moved away owing to a lack of talent. USask could make tech a signature area of focus/research as tech cuts across various sectors. A focus on tech, big data, AI, etc., will impact various areas.
- Focus on tech to meet the demand for talent.
- Artificial Intelligence: Computer science researchers, but also cancer will link to this type of initiative. Bioinformatics, precision medicine (bespoke treatments).
Technology and talent requirements in this area? Could be make Usask a hub for this type of research. In the past, Skip the dishes move to Winnipeg from Saskatoon. There is a demand for talent. Currently a hub for Ag tech. because of a lack incubators for startup. Could be initiate an incubator for start-up. It is here already and needs to grow. This also aligns with a current focus of the provincial government. Silicon prairies. This tech crosses many disciplines, health, ag, etc.

What should be the next steps in renewing USask’s signature areas?

- Look at them through the lens of sustainability and indigenization

- How do we ensure all voices on campus are heard; currently no significant area related to the humanities.
- Evaluating where we are at.
- Renewal is important. Concrete next steps includes the existing areas and nascent areas
- Pitches and proposals for renewing and refreshing existing – **reaffirming** existing areas, and identifying new areas
- Burden should be on the proponents to align with institutional, regional and national proposals
- Needs adjudication broadly
- Need to define the metrics – what is the strategic purpose
- Proposal comprising List of what we need to address
- Is this external or internal?
 - Is it to showcase to the Minister?
 - Or is it other things internal/external?
 - Or is it for faculty, and Focus on big grants?
- One Size does not fit all
 - E.g. Indigenous Peoples should be renamed!!! As it does not “study” signature areas
 - Coming up with a “rubric” for application/reaffirmation is tricky
- A universal strategy needs to be developed which can incorporate both existing and new areas
- Need all faculty to “see themselves” within the future signature areas
 - Especially in Arts and Science, many people do not see themselves at all
 - Areas need to be reflective of all faculty
 - Need to have a “foot” in at least one – will create a lot of harmony across campus. This is an opportunity for **massive reunification** across the campus. We do a lot more to harmonize teaching and academic programs than we do research.
- What justifies continued status of a signature area? Should there be a “sunset clause”?
- One Health - area seems to have done well – when used the narrow focus of One Health... particularly infectious diseases (VIDO). Beyond that – all health sciences colleges on campus – unique in Canada.. everything is here... participation for medicine is not at the level it should be for U15 ... Overall research funding – starting to improve in medicine – lag big time
- One Health ironically seems to exclude Medicine.. missing a key opportunity. Metabolic diseases and cancers – prevalent in Saskatchewan. Don’t get covered in One Health name.. Missed opportunity to focus on Sask Health – particularly with people... Health of the ecosystem in Saskatchewan...
- Pre-eminence in health in some areas, in animal health, environmental research. Having them work together seem to be key. Need to work more collaboratively/collectively.
- Don’t have designated leads to make things happen in a coherent way – no centers, etc. Some areas are linked to a college (e.g. Ag.).
- Taking the approach of “if you build it they will come” is too diffuse... Not building an infrastructure around the areas seems a key fault – need to have symposia, resources, team building, training,
- Structure behind the areas needs to be examined, reinforced. This would help identify revision of areas/addition of new ones.
- Research facilitators – could play a key role to linking to signature areas. They need more support/a pathway to link researchers into the areas.
- First and foremost, we need to evaluate where we are at. How far have we come since the Signature Areas were first established?

- We will need a call for, and a framework around, pitches and proposals, both for creating new Signature Areas and for reaffirming existing ones. We need to understand how areas align with institutional, regional, and national priorities.
- Measurement of success and creation of new areas must be a collective activity. Identifying coordinators for new and existing areas is very important.
- We also need to define metrics and look carefully and rationales for maintaining or establishing priority areas. A multi-stage process will likely be in order.
- We need better terms than Indigenous Peoples or Reconciliation (that latter being overloaded at this stage). We'll need brainstorming here. Again, we need to understand how funding aligns with research aspirations, the influence of regional politics, etc.
- Good support for existing signature areas of Synchrotron, Water, Energy and Mining, and Indigenous People, but there is a potential to improve the One Health initiative and Indigenous Peoples.
- We asked ourselves these questions: What should we be the best at? And what advantage do we have we could be better than anywhere else?
- Public Health area
- re-imagine one health under the Public health umbrella, we have lots of health disciplines, potential for the Vido-InterVac/Vet med, Agriculture, health community, indigenous knowledge
- Potential for social science integration (policy, law, indigenous knowledge)
- How do we communicate and bring units/researchers together? How do we undertake collaborations? How are we supporting this so that we know about others working on campus in these areas? (Even these discussions did a lot of that over the past two weeks!)
- What investments are being made centrally or otherwise due to having something fall within a signature area? (We might have scientists that say they would have done the research without the signature area, but they might not have had the opportunity to get the grants or attract those graduate students without the signature area in place, or the other investments in faculty and facilities that occurred because the signature area existed.)
- What investments are not made or not going to be made if they do not fall within a signature area?
- How much should our signature areas be a way to attract new or existing funding opportunities? (What are funding opportunities that exist to leverage federal, provincial, or other sources of funding?)
- Energy Security Institute; How to include Indigenous – what is the preeminence -- Fine Arts and Humanities – Quality of Life
- Potential actions? Who is on the ground doing this?
- Don't forget about sustainability – a lens that we look at everything that we do – a lens to look at every different area – like Indigenous – a lens to look at.
- To what end? Arts and Humanities? How do we value it as a signature area? Lots of content knowledge – how do we shift – minds, attitudes, policies, etc. It is the How we struggle with this.
- Under each signature area, we should have streams within each of them.
 - Agree -review breadth and allow for streaming.
- Haven't done this process with the signature areas before, so we might find areas that fit under each signature area.
- Maybe we haven't harnessed the signature areas or being intentional about it in our own research.
- Would like to know (hear) more about the resources that to be allocated to drive this forward
- Need to be pro-active in the next steps to understand how signature areas could look like at USask and what types of research is going on to fit in them.

- We don't know our own strengths. We should think about developing collaborations with other researchers on campus instead of looking to international collaborations.
- We should think about ways to get to know other researchers on campus. What are our big questions? Can we share these with others on campus. Almost like a meet-and-greet. We could consider offering seed funding for some collaborations that might emerge from these meetings.
- We should consider the different types of themes/areas
 - Did we develop strength and expertise in an areas over time?
 - Did we identify an area of interest that we would like to achieve expertise in?
- The purpose of these areas will drive the importance/role of inclusion
- Many important areas already have been addressed over decades but left out:
 - Social Issues
 - Racism
 - Sexism
 - Housing and Homelessness
 - Humanities are just not represented.
- There is a lot of expertise in these areas but no where to be seen in the signature areas.
- Danger to look for new and emergent areas.
- Need to re-think knowledge economies...and for whom?
- One Health—need to go beyond this.
- Embarrassing that since we are one of the top 15...nothing on Health. No box we can even check off on the signature areas. Disturbing and affects how some of us can attract funding. If this were university-wide, then we would do better. Then it would be a way that many areas can focus on. Lots of investment already.
- Another suggestion for cross-disciplinary signature area: Climate Change
- Quantum Innovation...development of quantum computers (superfast computers).
- Need more data to make decisions---how has this impacted # postdocs, grad students, funding, etc.
- Next steps in renewing USask's Signature Areas?
- List subject matter experts.
- **Consult** – not just within university but with stakeholders e.g. tech community for tech signature area of research. Consult with general public too.
- Are these areas still relevant? If yes, are they the right kinds of areas? What should change?
- If you have precision medicine as an area or health, how many people within USask would participate more?
- After consultations, **align core priority areas identified, have alignment within university.**
- How do we keep engaging those core areas.
- **In addition to long-term vision, have a three year rolling plan.** This would be an active plan with three main priorities, very long-term plans would not be sustainable without short-term action items (as part of the rolling plan).
- **Ask: How many SARs do we want; how many do we need?**
- Some faculty/staff colleges/departments don't feel engaged or part of the current SAR. This disengagement could be counterproductive as people don't feel they fit in or align with any area.
- Where do you want your SAR to be? How did these areas come to be? We were informed that's where the university is focused as SAR.

- Are SAR going where the money is or where the province needs us to go? Do they go where investments are or where the need is?
- They can't be too long-term as people engaged now may be planning to retire soon and may not be able to speak to what the priorities should be long-term.
- How do we use these SAR to take down silos and not create them?
- How do we at the university across all these areas help people do *team science*?
- Anyone not identified in an SAR will feel excluded. We don't want them exclusive but more team-based, more 'global'. **People should have a line of sight that what they're doing is contributing to at least one SAR.**
- **Think about things more broadly. Keep them broad.** Use broad terms e.g. Health vs. One health.
- SAR do need to have some definitions – "USask is an expert in these areas." However, broad definitions will help others probable see themselves in different areas of research.
- There's more emphasis on superclusters. USask is focused on protein supercluster.
- Protein supercluster.
- Big data in health.
- The renewal of the SAR should be transparent and the rationale obvious, so it's not just political motivations.
- There should be actual action items tied to the SAR so they can be obvious to all.
- They should communicate these successes regularly to the university community and outside.
- **USask should promote its research to all.** This will build its reputation and help its fundraising, eg very rich pharma company in SK funding research in UBC when there is lots of great health research happening here.
- Saskatchewan needs to celebrate its success, don't be shy about it.
- There's been an increase in profiling the work the university is doing.
- Broaden One Health to include general Health. Too restrictive.
- Next steps: connection to other stakeholders. Outside of the university. What are the needs in talent and tech and how do we connect with the needs of Saskatchewan and Saskatoon. Are the signature areas relevant to the general public and the community. The university the world and the province needs.
- The signature areas should be broad and incorporate all faculty. Signature areas should be designed to be cross disciplinary. Ag, Water and Food might be too restrictive and siloed. Signature areas might be modified to cross field and be more trans-disciplinary, and community driven. Create and maintain research linkages. A wider scope will allow for teams and networks form organically instead of mandated through a narrow signature area.
- Team Science: How do we promote and foster team science. It does take a different mindset and management to be successful. Every researcher should see themselves in more than one signature area to encourage team and network science.
- It also needs a mechanism to assess success. Needs to link research and philanthropic side of the University. How do we align research and philanthropic goals. Again, suggests links to community and communication.
- How many signature areas do we need? How many do we want? How do we change them?
- How to engage good researchers who do not fit into the current plan.
- Are the signature areas going to where the \$ is, or is it what we actually need?
- Do we link to Superclusters (funded by prov and companies). Do we link with these superclusters? This might be a linkage to the AI and big data, bioinformatics.

- New and modified signature areas should involve wide consultation, like today and perhaps even wider. Cudos to Balijit for today, and continue we encourage wider and continued consultation.
- Transparency in how priority areas are selected and how they are promoted and funded. Priority areas should have action items and goals and measures of success.
- What actually happened with the signature areas over the last 5 or more years.
- The University needs to focus on PR. We do good work here and we need to promote that. There needs to be transparency in what is promoted.

General Signature Area Engagement

May 18, 2021

Breakout Room Summary

What would you change about USask's existing signature areas, if anything?

- Cross-disciplinary research – CRC – surface of the Earth to surface of Sun
- Energy Security – instead of Minerals and Energy – stronger links with other areas
- Must be Excellent, and not needed to be linked to a Signature area. Should provide support for all young faculty, and not needed to be linked to a Signature area
- One Health – does not really include Mental Health at the moment, should expand to include this, public health, psychology, student issues
- Criteria as to how signature areas defined, must be clearer
- Must be relevant to the society we serve
- An issue with having to click on a signature area in grant applications. e.g College of Law – need to not include a “not applicable” box
- More links with Social Sciences and Humanities
- They must be areas that enhance the reputation of the university
- Signature areas have been a barrier to graduate students – when you request any kind of funding to get a visitor, there are these priority lists, so if you are not addressing a Signature Area, it is not a priority. Arts and Science organized an informative session for faculty when NSERC was changing their model, when it was harder to get grads – an external speaker who visited was surprised that we were still doing signature areas, as other universities had stopped focusing on them
- Computer science isn't in a signature area, but rather than including CS, I'd like to get rid of the signature area
- Signature areas lack focus and metrics – they need more leadership, strategy, and an evaluation method to see if they are working.
- was the rationale for the SA approach solid? There do not seem to be any evaluation metrics for them.
- some areas have served us very well – such as Agriculture, enhancing Global Institute of Food Security; tying GIFS more tightly with the university through the SA would be useful. Water Security, GIWS is also strong
- Energy, Minerals and Resources – why do we have this as a Signature Area? Not clear. Having the Fedoruk Centre is good for us, good for the country, but it is small, and needs a lot more focus if it stays an SA
- Indigenous needs to be underlying in everything we do, not as a single signature area, but across all areas. Indigenous signature area has been very under-resourced
- Synchrotron is national, could be eliminated as a Signature Area
- OneHealth – have heard a lot about it, but it is unclear what it has actually done for us as a university; this Signature Area is not understood very well
- We have not served some of the signature areas well
- Signature Areas is a good external facing document, but does not speak to what individual faculty members are doing
- Signature Areas are the Signature Areas because we are good at them, not because they are signature areas.
- original signature areas were priorities of the government that we adopted, so we can say we are doing what the government wanted. We should focus on what areas we are already best at to succeed
- Could also be a necessity to foster more strengths as a province in some areas, with Indigenous being a good example

- rankings of colleges and departments – Engineering was ranked highly, but not in a Signature Area – gradually its ranking has fallen. Are these areas aspirational? Too much of an exercise in picking winners and losers. That exercise can be damaging. Alongside some things that we are good at, there are also things which are ambitious ambitious science. An inordinate amount of focus on synchrotron science. In some sense, we are focusing on quick, large amount of output in terms of publications, citations and so on. Culture of self-citation is damaging. We do need ways of encouraging, supporting some areas – long shot areas
- For Signature Areas in general, we need good definitions for them, why we have them, vision, goals, metrics, and if the vision of the signature areas are to intersect with one other, this needs to be encouraged, as Areas are siloed
- helping people understand what work is going on campus, where people can collaborate, and the work of Fine Arts and Humanities – it is not captured currently – should this be woven across other Signature Areas
- we also have to be thinking about where we are going, what areas new faculty are going in
- Humanities and Fine Arts and Computer Science, have been thought of as an add-on. One signature area has to be Arts and Communities – the impact they have when they go out into communities, and when they bring people onto campus is immense.
- faculty are driving their research programs, for many reasons – nervous about pre-judging what they want. That kind of negates the point of being a professor. Don't want someone else to decide for us what focus areas should be. We could use SAs to inform complement planning, but once they are here, it's tabula rasa – maybe signature areas are not part of OVPR. Maybe they belong to Colleges and Vice-Provost, Academic Engagement
- very powerful culture of collaboration at USask – one researcher says they collaborate with 22 other colleges and departments across campus. Both an advantage and disadvantage that we are small, so have opportunities to collaborate
- small group in College of Medicine wondered if Signature Areas were necessary – but we also conceptualized a plan that would encompass everyone on campus – a Signature Area for everyone. We are interested in ***Sustaining Health and Preventing Disease*** as a new Signature Area – there is not one single discipline or faculty member on this campus who could not be engaged in that. Sometimes it's biology, in many cases well beyond biology. It's more than medicine that can preserve health, help in restoring health. We need something like that to captivate people. Not being constrained by these areas
- maybe there needs to be a different format for Signature Areas, of what that might look like
- perhaps it should be a bottom up thing, rather than a top down thing
- while I understand the importance of interdisciplinary work, there is still a historic legacy of thinking about disciplines that lock them into a role, Computer Science being a good example, as more of a service environment. Our value as scientists in our own discipline is not being valued
- my experience in working with CS has inspired totally new ways
- There needs to be a signature area related to Human Health, what One Health has become (human, environmental, animal), it is not all inclusive but it narrowly restricts our research, only U15 with a medical school that doesn't identify human health as a signature area, loves the concept of One Health, good forward thinking about the interaction across the spectrum, misses factors outside of the areas or within the factors, we can keep One Health but we need Human Health as a signature area, with one single health authority there is a large interest in research, new health authority is actually is interested, if we don't take greater ownership over this area then others will.
- Sustainability reporting, challenges is there is not well-defined definition, while it is great we have important initiatives or centres/initiatives

- Needs updating the language, focused and limiting, created a bit more opportunity for collaboration, working in the sustainability space, can relate to water security and mining but not necessarily, open to promoting collaboration, collaboration across all of
- Marketing/communications on campus related to the signature areas, when you are applying for research what are the signature areas?
- Would like immigrant and other multicultural groups instead of indigenous peoples, looking at diversity and inclusion, areas of importance but does not translate into research areas, we are discriminating certain people but do we want to discriminate against any people – needs to be there for humanitarian and resource reasons, need to give back to these communities and we need to consult with shark areas, what are they coming up, important signature areas humanity, society, arts and culture, ignoring diversity and inclusion, it is the gap that has allowed to continued, unless they are engaged in indigenous research unless they are all inclusive
- Need to be clear about the purpose, articulate the signature area, something we are known for but these were the four areas of research that we receive the most resource allocation and be the most prolific, would be surprised if we were known for four out of the six of these, if you look at five of the rankings, high with respect to water security, otherwise we are 18/19 in Canada, would be interesting to know when they were designed, what is different now? Need to be very clear about the purpose and with that it needs to be well-known, something we know we won't focus our research on and it needs to be there to make the right decisions to move us forward. We need well-defined purpose and rationale for each signature area.
- Clear articulation of the purpose, areas are those that one promotes, we are strong and proud of and have strength in, in terms of how these were selected , needs to be highly disciplinary and that infrastructure to apply for large funding, once you say here is what we are known for, not everyone in the University can tie into the area but we want to have some kind of way to have high profile areas emerge and sunset ones that have left. Make sure they are cyclical, have a clear process and structure, wasn't clear who lead a signature area, for her as wanting to support recruitment for graduate students and post-docs, having those to promote, they won't land in one of those buckets
- Signature areas have been barrier to funding invited speakers, getting grad student funding.
- An obsolete idea, long dropped by comparator institutions because of the damage done by excluding the non-signature areas
- Areas need to be diverse, study of society is broad.
- Involve others in decision making process, committees struck with representatives to review signature area proposals, screen of proposals , once the signature areas are selected, there could be a vote on which ones to be prioritized, the areas are opened and transparent and we would understand where they come from.
- Getting feedback is important, data rich process, already on the road to success, community of researchers on that front, we know through tenure and promotion to evaluate the research coming forward.
- Stick with two ends, one is encouraging and one is discouraging.
- No evidence of usefulness: Not clear why synchrotron is signature areas: what has it done in the 9-10 years for us. Fedoruk Center is good for the country, but too small. One health: not clear what it is about.
- Synchrotron is about a large investment into infrastructure which leads to large quantity of publications. Fast and formulaic research for improving institutional bibliometric profile and ranking. Need to create space for more ambitious, less formulaic work representing long-shot efforts.
- The huge emphasis on quantity vs. quality has created negative incentives for things like excessive self-citation, leading to embarrassing consequences: a U of S faculty member leads Canada in self-citations (>60% citations are self-citations).

- Quoting a former mentor's take on the vision document proposing signature areas: "An excellent document PR point of view, as long as it is not used for making decisions."
- Need to let researchers do what they want to do rather than tell them to do something particular to be supported.
- In addition to "what we're good at", "what are societal/local/moral imperatives", also need to invest in important areas of our times.
- Picking winners and losers in a top-down manner has served us poorly. It is always risky because you can get things wrong.
- Need good definitions for signature areas. Platform for inter-signature areas. Question: Do we want indigenous researchers to be add-ons to other projects, or does indigenous get weaved into others
- Fascinating how much collaboration is possible here. When you have a plan, there should always be a box with the name of a signature area for you. Everyone can collaborate. Constraining role of signature areas is negative.
- Signature areas should evolve bottom-up. There should be space for ambitious research in a field like Computer Science; it should not always be about how you can benefit some other "signature area."
- If having signature areas is a PR exercise to promote the university to the outside world, great.
- If having signature areas is about what faculty need to become good at, that's a problem. It should be bottom up.
- The perspective of Indigenous – strengths in Indigenous health, Indigenous student support and recruitment, seem to be going well.
- We should be the preeminent centre for Indigenous research in Canada – not there yet
- People hired should have an understanding of reconciliation, be able to understand Indigenous perspectives
- Wish there were better connections between them.
- Interconnectivity – great strengths in the signature areas but we need to promote interconnectivity among signature areas and stronger interconnectivity with the university itself (signature areas seem siloed). Then we may have more buy in with the rest of the faculty.
- The main principles of research should be embedded within each signature area.
- Great support for interconnectivity. Different disciplines and perspectives need to be incorporated.
- How do we communicate among these areas?
- How do we achieve greater success? Connecting with the community, the researchers, the university.
- Equity in the academy. Genuine equity requires careful considerations. Some parts need more support, not equal cutbacks. Equal treatment across the board does not achieve equity.
- USask needs to be reaching out to generate support – advocacy is important.
- We want to know how we can be more active with government – lobbying from every faculty member.
- Physical, security needs of students are crucial for academic success. They will succeed if we put the supports in place.
- EDI and sex and gender part of grant applications and yet we are addressing it from a siloed approach, so we need to address from all perspectives
- Limitation with the current signature areas is a lack of health sciences focus; there is one health, which is very important, but not very inclusive; USask has all of the major health sciences colleges on campus yet only a small proportion of faculty fall under the umbrella of any signature area
- Drama as well as many of the fine arts, humanities, and social sciences are not included under any of the current signature areas; There is a great deal of Indigenous Peoples work but there is also a large proportion who do not work in this area
- This is similar to education (a great deal of Indigenous Peoples work but there is also a large proportion who do not work in this area) leaving many people unconnected

- There is concern that people need to shape their research to fall in line with signature areas but this is difficult for many people making them unsure of how they fit; there are examples of other institutions who have better coverage of members of their university
- There is a desire to have sig areas that are more inclusive
- There was also discussion around how broad to make the areas – if too broad then are they truly areas of specialty?
- There are no sig areas led by social sciences or humanities; this requires fixing
- There are a number of researchers who do find a great deal of success without being attached to a signature area
- It would be helpful to focus on SK area specific topics, where we have strength but also important nationally and internationally.
- COM has been developing ideas around signature areas; one of focus, which results from past work in the college to find strengths and areas where we could bring people together is the origins of health and disease; this area would bring together researchers from across disciplines and from biomedical to clinical to population; it could also tie together with some of the other current sig areas; it will address the potential underuse of certain infrastructure and increase collaborations between the health colleges; many researchers in health sciences could align with this area
- In the past, there was a push towards a larger initiative in the arts and social sciences but this has not been worked on in a while; this included a push around a performing arts facility;
- It can be difficult to collaborate when there are pockets of expertise across campus and to try and find enough people to do some of the work; how can you build something bigger with a small critical mass to start with
- Much of the education research would be applicable across campus and there are a number of strengths in this area already; also teaching and learning span the whole spectrum of work at the USask; it is already very much inter-D
- It may be more important to build on themes as opposed to disciplines; underserved populations could be one such theme; rural and remote could be another
- Dentistry spans a number of themes including policy and public health work
- Some sections of health of importance may be environmental/behavioural work and much of health research could be linked to e-health, AI, etc; these would allow for links across campus
- One approach might be to build around current strengths; USask has a lot so let's build on them
- Important to remember that faculty are the key; they are critical to this process; we need the people
- SCPOR is an important group and listening to the community is also important
- We must do an environmental scan to see what we have already – in and out of the current sig areas – and find our strengths; this would also include looking at the threats and opportunities that are out there; are there matches?
- Need better connectivity
- Will need to consider metrics (traditional scientific but also others such as KT, process, community engagement, public scholarship, etc)
- What are some potential points of connection – gap areas where there are some strengths distributed and we could bring together through a sig area
- We need enough people from a number of backgrounds to truly have inter-D
- What are the important metrics that can inform the profession (whichever profession that may be)
- How can you include or consider community engagement?
- Knowing what SK needs is a strength but we also have to be able to connect to nationally and internationally important outcomes as well
- We want to improve collaborations but to do this we need resources – an example is cube granting where three investigators from 3 different disciplines are brought together to solve a problem

- We need to have a good understanding of what is out there – if we don't know what people are doing, we cannot collaborate
- A hybrid approach that includes top down and bottom up methods should be considered
- We need to look at different forms of metrics but we cannot forget about traditional metrics as this is how we will be compared to other institutions etc
- Need to work with grad studies to help build innovative grad programs as well; these programs can be used to help support sig areas
- Climate Change will be important in the future.
 - Inclusivity - add to... each of the signature areas; pathways on how people could be included.
 - The words signature areas do not resonate with Arts.
 - Signature areas seem to be fracturing rather than bringing Faculty together across the university e.g. Energy and Mineral Resources should be changed to Sustainability; Indigenous Peoples could be changed to Partnerships
 - Titles may be limiting...
 - Broaden the base of One Health to be more inclusive e.g. primary health care; communities
 - Add arts-based research into the mix of methods used in communities, etc.

Summary: labelling the areas and - authentic and inclusive...

Signature communicates to the public and funding agencies... integrated across disciplines and therefore needs to promote interdisciplinarity in the new space; narrative and stories are critical to understanding.

- pathways that could be plugged into the various signature areas - where are all the people

- ecology - radical human ecology (book)/economy

Reflections: How do the signature areas make our space/university/province a better place? - value added; should our outcomes of research make the research communities better or the environments where people live?

- One Health lacks a strong human health component
 - *Take away – it was hard to put some ideas in a definite category for a proposed signature area and there was uncertainty as to what aspects need to transform.*
- Defining challenge for the next 10 years will be climate and climate change.
- Climate and biodiversity – ecology ??
- Six signature areas fit under “ecology”
- Not a fan of “signature areas”
- The areas are exclusive of the Fine Arts and Humanities, though not fully exclusive of
- How can signature areas be as inclusive as possible?
- Can be a challenge in linking research to six signature areas.
- Both in topic and how they reach out to researchers on campus
- Pathways for disciplines to be included in the signature areas.
- Clear on how they can linkup/connect to the areas
- Areas may have lead to fracturing across the university, where people are not feeling connected
- Does it lead to some researchers feeling less valued because they don't directly connect?
- Signature area of energy and mineral resources is poorly named and not a strength of our institution.
- Sustainable development is a strength and can be more inclusive.
- The title “Indigenous Peoples” – can sound like we are research Indigenous peoples, versus building partnerships and opportunities.
- One Health
- Missing focus on people – clinical side of the house is not represented
- Community focused approach
- Go back to the basics – tell stories, answer questions from the community

- The publicity that comes from research services is heavily focused on the sciences.
- If we had to create a new area, it would have a community focus
- Creates a more inclusive space and opportunity to connect research to a broader base
- Arts-based connection – its heavily science focused
- Arts expression can lead to another means of communication/telling stories
- Our signature areas need to be authentic to what we do
- Value of signature areas can communicate to the public our strengths, to funding agencies (rally around signature areas to secure large grants) that are integrative across disciplines
- If the signature areas are too discipline-focused, it may exclude or limit collaboration (unintentionally)
- Consider the role of story-telling and narrative across research.
- Story telling is an important aspect – numbers can tell a story.
- How does research speak to the broader community? Make our community a better place.
- Is the area of “Indigenous Peoples” authentic? Is it what we are trying to do?
- Pathways – how does our work plug into the signature areas, particularly ones that we don’t see?
- E.g. in Ag, how do I see my research connecting in or supporting?
- This is why “ecology” is a great term – is allows for a broader connection.
- Lends itself well to interdisciplinary approaches.
- Community has many different meanings.
- Research should be communicated in such a way to relates to the “public” >> intended audience
- We have a new community with our move to online meetings, communications.
- The “public” – intended audience – needs to have stake/interest in our work.
- Language
- If we are going to meet the needs of the “people”, the words need to resonate with the public.
- Ecology may be a challenging term
- We need more bottom-up style research.
- Meet the needs of the community.
- Cross discipline integration of different programs
- Expanding to weather, environment etc.
- The side of mineral and energy resources need more attention. The switch to energy would be really interesting to improve that particular signature area.
- Most important signature area as a university should be excellence. We need an emphasis on excellence. This is especially important for young people so they can thrive and we are currently lacking this.
- We are somewhat reactive....we are waiting for others to act and then follow. If there is a discussion of signature areas, we have to make sure they are not static. We have to take steps to anticipate and respond to it. Emphasis on quantum innovation as rubric and banner – this will attract especially young people.
- We don’t see human health in the signature areas. We need to prioritize mental health, especially for students. Maybe the criteria for the signature areas need to be revised or renewed to focus more on these areas.
- We need to be relevant as a University to the society we serve.
- Encompass humanities more
- 🚩 In Group 9 there was a consensus that Signature Areas were, or at least had the potential to be, a good thing. Several members of that Group, however, felt they did not have sufficient understanding of the goals or substance of the current Signature Areas. Related to this, and perhaps most troubling for

some, was their inability to see how their research work aligned with, and was encompassed by, the current Signature Areas. A strategy suggested as a way to address the issue of inclusion and exclusion was to conceptualize Signature Areas more abstractly. It was claimed that by doing so more of what faculty members do could be coherently included under Signature Area heading. One suggestion in this vein was to have a Signature Area identified as *Creativity and Innovation*, or something similar to that. The associated argument that this would create a conceptual space for the Fine and Performing Arts, as well as business and social entrepreneurship, kinesiology, and so on.

In a similar vein, I want to propose for consideration a Signature Area in *Social Diversity, Inclusion and Equity*. In the contemporary context of social and cultural divisiveness and political polarization, a Signature focus on the things that bring us together as well as the things that drive us apart could not be more timely or necessary. If, in fact, we want to achieve the goal of being the University the World Needs we cannot as an institution ignore these issues. A Signature Area encompassing *Social Diversity, Inclusion and Equity* (or something similar) would encompass much of the work currently being done in the areas of immigration and mobility and refugees, race and ethnic relations, Indigenization and reconciliation, gender and sexualities, human rights and democracy, health, education, and economic equity, disabilities and accessibilities, food and water security, sustainability and climate justice, and so on. Under a Signature Area very abstractly conceived several substantive, interdisciplinary groups currently active can be identified, as well as groups that potentially could be formed around emergent funding opportunities. Many individual faculty members, and academic units that currently feel their work is devalued because it cannot be aligned with current Signature Areas could be made to feel that they actually are part of the University's vision of itself and ambitions for the future

I believe that achieving a new more equitable and inclusive university involves recognizing the strengths that come from diverse knowledge traditions. Baljit, I think it is also important to recognize not only research, that is, the production and discovery of new knowledge, but also the innovative and essential tasks of knowledge translation and application.

- Include strong representation of health sciences research themes that has the potential to bring CIHR funding to the USask
- Perception that the One Health signature area is very limited to veterinary medicine.
- Include humanities/social sciences/arts/education within the signature areas.
- Need to be more inclusive.
- Need to use USask strengths (including unique infrastructure) while building on real trans-disciplinarity.
- Need to focus more on “people” and communities.

What new or emerging areas could USask adopt as a signature area?

- Not static signature areas. Anticipate areas in the future. Be proactive, not retroactive
- National Quantum strategy by the federal government – **quantum innovation**, to attract new young researchers. Quantum physics used to build new materials, quantum mechanics and computation and practical applications
- Big data
- U. Calgary – science innovation, transitions – moving forward – intersecting with other disciplines
- Expanding away from the “silos” focus. U. Ottawa – different ways to describe them as “actions”, “moving forward”
- Anticipatory, movement, socially relevant, excellence is important
- OneHealth Signature Area is really not well understood – do we need a new, broader health Signature Area, that is not as constraining?
- If they must be signature areas, Computer Science should be one of them
- In order to figure out what the area should be, defining what they should be would be the first step, doesn't understand them despite efforts to see himself in them

- Depends on what you are trying to do, focus on Human Health, may be areas we intersect with other areas of health such as infectious diseases, too narrow for a University signature area, focus on the health brings in the health professions, VIDO, light source, some of which fall under the One Health thing, it narrows the focus in practice rather than broadens the practice.
- Could easily draw out indigenous health, could overlap with other signature areas, wouldn't advocate with others, could happen at the college/health sciences level.
- Sitting around here we can't determine this, needs to be a call to the community, gap with social sciences and humanities, role for understanding what we are known for – ground work of the public perception on how we can look at these, open process taking things that came in from different groups, pulled together the themes that emerged from the calls that came in, this group over here in political science/education/health and have high impact, risk of being too generic, it gets you nowhere, if we just say its human health, it's about branding in the end.
- Don't have anything about human health, Healthy Saskatchewan or something like that, brand it appropriately.
- Whatever we do for the research signature areas, need to have them reflected on the teaching signature area, to study something as well, can't separate out the two, can't bring researchers here without bolstering the teaching/academic side, related to the humanities and social science piece, recognize in a formal way that whatever our research areas are there should be a prominent social sciences and humanities focus on each, pandemics (i.e. VIDO) can fit under the signature research area, how does it affect society?
- Signature areas should be about the University and not just research, SK health authority has 43,000 employees, largest employer of our alumni, if we think about what the signature areas need, endless examples of this.
- What came out of the discussions earlier in the year with sr. leaders was an idea to identify academic signature areas as people are wondering why they are different, sees room for both academic and research signature areas.
- Academic programs should align with the strengths of research, but they are leveraged in a variety of ways, comes down into which CFIs will be matched into, there is an alignment with having a research strategic plan that we invest in, prioritize them because they are important.
- Pedagogy doesn't fit into a single area, does not have anything that deals with people, the University doesn't have a signature area that deals with people beyond health, problem with the current areas they exclude people unless it is indigenous people, this is why when we are applying for funding there is no signature area, it means the research is not important but yet it is important because it is being funded at the international/national level, why are Universities not doing this because there is no excuse.
- If we feel that identifying a signature area makes sense, that we are prominent in an area, there needs to be a closer link to have a good pedagogy around it, what is the purpose behind, the thought that with this would help differentiate us and not sure it would be fully realized otherwise.
- Indigenous
- Agriculture makes sense. Water: we need to be able to speak to water
- Ag and water make a lot of sense to prioritize
- Arts and communities has to be a signature area.
- Interdisciplinary approaches
- Quantum innovation: Draws on social sciences and humanities. Critical mass of researchers on campus. Reaching a stage of a nascent area. Now innovation and start ups in quantum research are a government priority.
- Level of interdisciplinary in this work
- Wicked challenges of the world requires interdisciplinary approaches

- EDI -
- Planetary health, how many dimensions and elements are included in that – requires a very interdisciplinary approach
- How do we build connections?
- It can be important to define the cross-cutting elements of the signature areas but what about happiness?
- Concept of happiness is primary in some world economies and bringing in other perspectives such as Indigenous world views.
- We need to find ways to bring in social sciences and humanities within the signature areas.
- We need to address our environment and ecology. Betterment of the community.
- Elders and knowledge holders talk about living well and being stewards of the resources.
- What are some new areas - community vibrancy; sustainable development; one health and vibrant communities
 - inclusive and broader
 - ecology - term should become well known in the future
 - climate change is a global threat
 - primary care/primary health care - people to people interface
 - be the university this province needs (improve the health and well-being, natural resources)
 - CARE - much that we can do with care; social science; science; plants, natural resources
 - hard science and CARE - balance; social justice; power relationships that are at the heart of society

Reflections

- how can the research benefit the individual, the community, the city & the province...?
- people focused
- Include social sciences and sustainability (collaborative, transformative)
- Include a cross-disciplinary (nexus of two or more categories within Indigenous, Health, Engineering, Ag, and Humanities)
- Include climate change and global interface
- Include publicly-engaged research (multi-disciplinary and with community partners)
- Include “New Frontiers” in Quantum Innovation (Data, AI, Computer Sc.)
- Take away: A mapping guide that provides a clear picture of existing and proposed signature areas and how they will impact research, resources and programs. The faculty want to know they are included in the at least one of the signature areas.
- Community vibrancy – can be a broad term
- You need to keep signature areas condensed – six is probably the max
- Sustainable Development lends itself well to inclusion.
- E.g. One Health and Vibrant Communities
- Clinical-based / people side of research is important.
- Ecology – or similar term, to bring connection to global issues (e.g. pandemic, climate change)
- This may be a future-driven term.
- Focus on people
- Primary health care / primary care – we need to spend a lot of money on improving areas such as long term care facilities, Indigenous communities, immigrant communities
- Its important to keep research connected to the ground level – people who are most impacted.
- Difference between front line patients and bureaucrat
- Be the university the province/Saskatchewan needs.
- We are very globally focused.

- We are missing opportunities at home to make improve/better conditions at home.
- We face a lot of challenges at home.
- A focus on “care” – health care, social sciences, care for the planet (climate change)
- Bring in a balance which are less “science” focused, but which science can connect.
- Social justice – the human element in power dynamics, community challenges
- Grant challenges – they involve movement and change instead of silo ones like water security and food security
- Quantum research will affect the society immensely. We should be anticipatory in this area.
- Areas with strong ties and strengths to Saskatchewan that can also become “what the world needs”
 - Environmental Health: How environment and lifestyle affect human health. This can be linked to environmental sciences, computer sciences (big data, AI, bioinformatics, persuasion to change lifestyles for better health, etc.), community engagements, toxicology, water, food, engineering (biosensors), biology, etc.
 - Origins of Health/Diseases
 - Access to care for underserved/remote/rural populations
 - Arts/Education/Social Sciences applied to Environment/Sustainability/Indigenous Peoples.

What should be the next steps in renewing USask’s signature areas?

- Focus on younger researchers and students, and get their input into the process
- maybe we should be using Signature Areas just for public relations purposes -- processes for getting into the limelight; plans and visions belong to deans at the university
- Public image, funding, recruitment – what is the goal of us determining the signature areas?
- Not clear that there are any metrics to see if the efforts to prioritize certain signature areas have been successful, and beneficial to the province.
- An informed view: Energy is a signature area because the SK government wants it to be.
- In addition to the need to invest in areas which we are good at (e.g., agriculture), there are societal imperatives to invest in some areas.
- How can budgets help facilitate some of these areas, some of this work? The cost of not investing in education is horrible.
- Safe communities are critical; public pressure is important. Research and development are one lever but we need to raise “hell” in emphasizing the need for more funding.
- Process around renewing signature areas, now that 10 years are passed it is on proponents to review them – challenges, strengths, is continued status warranted
- Call for pitches to new signature area. Rationale for new ones?
- Working on connections among our groups.
- How do we draw these individuals together?
- what do we do now...
- lots of support for the way the processes were undertaken (engagement) - congratulations - participatory processes...
- create benefits for all... including communities
- ***ecology of care***... broad base; think very careful about language
- looking forward to learning about the findings/results of the process
- What is the metric for existing and new signature areas (excellence, merit) how are they selected? - - -
Does Industry influence these signature areas?
 - If we currently don’t fit into these signature areas, are we being left behind? Is our research irrelevant?
 - There is a need for ECR to align or risk being not supported or “not applicable”

- Changes must be in consultation with Faculty
- What is the evaluation process going to look like for the renewal – how do we know it will be successful?

Take away: There was uncertainty with the steps in the renewal and if these areas are tied to other resources such as funding and support. The faculty would like a special faculty advisory committee to be included in this transformative process

- Good direction that Provost and VPR are coming together on this.
- Seeking input into these areas is a good step – can help increase/improve our collaboration.
- Ecology of Care – concept is strong, perhaps framed in a different way
- Care – it's an impactful word
- We need to be very conscious of language – what does it communicate?
- We need to make the language that everyone can understand
- Engage the community.
- We need to be a resource to the province.
- Signature areas should be phrased in a different way instead of the silo topics.
- Try and get the university recognized in certain areas. The University should recognize all sorts of individuals and not just from the signature areas.
- Signature areas shouldn't be everything. The grant applications should not be linked to the signature areas.
- Do an environmental scan for all other USask areas of strength that currently are not included in the signature areas (use metrics such as publications, grant funding, social media, community engagement, etc.).
- Increase connectivity between researchers and colleges in areas that can result in new signature themes. Combine different graduate programs into unique interdisciplinary programs to further strengthen trans-disciplinarity in current and future signature areas.
- Improve KT for new and current signature areas.
- Provide significant resources to support new/current areas with increased trans-disciplinary research/education collaborations.
- Imply a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches for taking the final decisions.

General Signature Area Engagement

May 19, 2021

Breakout Room Summary

What would you change about USask's existing signature areas, if anything?

- Investment in social sciences, arts and humanities
- not closely connected to the signature areas. Catalyzed and done good things for the university – never felt personally connected. Broadening so more people can feel connected in some ways to a signature area. Might lead to increasing sense of belonging and collaboration. Very science-focused – not at all connected to the work I do, or my immediate colleagues.
- endorsement – all faculty need to see their reflection in the signature areas – reduces connectivity to space and place – the forward momentum of the uni is moving on and they're sitting at train station trying to get on board
- put emphasis on excellence in general and high quality work – very many people who do excellent work and they are not connected to any officially recognized areas – one of the things we could improve. Emphasize more excellence. Topics of massive general interest but also those little topics become something big when you wait long enough – anticipating that excellent work will result in some important impacts. – important for how young faculty we hire view our institution. Recognized whether they are officially in sig areas or not.
- Less reactive – has to do with the ideas of sig areas – are they static or dynamic? A good uni will put effort on dynamic ones – constant flow of new things – the uni should be at the forefront. Direct interest to me – federal government established the strategy with quantum research – completely different from what we are pursuing in the prairies – we should be looking forward at what we do – in the province and anticipatory of things that will become important for all of this for the whole society – quantum research is a big global thing – USA and China – spillover and federal govt has national quantum strategy and there's \$ earmarked for that. Quantum innovation should be a banner we support.
- can't be static – need some nimble elements and [pivot appropriately where required.
- so I can speak from research facilitation POV – international funding opp's – we seen that there needs to be an interconnectedness that impacts on societal improvement – increasingly that's what funders are asking for – how does it impact society? Weave that in somehow? One signature area should advance the initiative of the other – cooperating. Value proposition – how does it create societal impact and what does it look like?
- privilege of being at two other discussion – themes similar. College of Med – small group of us discussing ways to engage the entire university community – communities in SK and beyond – theme that keeps coming up which every faculty member in the uni could embrace is discovering the earliest origins of health and disease – incite disease or ensure health – everyone here on this call would be helpful – origins beyond biology and the solutions are beyond medicine. Need to create an environment – disadvantage is the small size, but also advantage that it is small – culture of collaboration and emerge and propel ourselves into an area of productivity excellence and international excellence. Origins of disease –and health Sask FOR A HEALTHY world – benefit people here and the world. We feel that as you have all articulated there is both opportunity and responsibility for us to work collaboratively. Earliest origins of health and disease – biological, fine arts, humanities, etc. technology AI, statistics all contribute to a better world – how can use this research as a new economic driver – but also ensure more social equity within our world and communities. Captivate all in the uni – not just biomedical ones for health.
- just wanted to echo sentiments of importance of faculty and students and staff to see themselves in the signature areas – challenges when you just look at social sciences etc. not as obvious as water

security. Sig areas might be appropriate as they are now and rewording so that everyone can see them in them is relevant. Societal impact.

- one change – connect with one health – that term if we could change – one health is so broad that it loses its meaning. One Health can mean a lot – terminology needs to be more specific. Two examples – really feel that within society there is a tsunami of mental health driven by pandemic and other societal factors as well – see a lot of meanness in society. Hurting people’s mental health. See pandemic – Alan’s point of connecting AI and analytics – see it in supply chain – delivering vaccines or lumber. Such a pervasive concept here. Ability for One Health to have more depth – more meaning by having subthemes.
- Need to emphasize some non-science areas. The existing Signature Areas create the impression that we are not Arts / Humanities friendly. This is not good for existing researchers and also impedes recruitment of new researchers.
- Saskatchewan needs to be emphasized in the Signature Areas. Saskatchewan itself is a theme: its people, history, resources, and politics.
- Part of this could be "Healthy Saskatchewan": a holistic lens on health determinants in the province. We need to invigorate the health sciences cluster: One Health sounds inclusive but is too narrow. Too many people are left out of research support if they can’t select a “Signature Area” checkbox during internal screening for funds and awards.
- we must ensure that faculty research support, e.g. institutional sponsorship for major funding and awards, is prioritized not only for those attached to Signature Areas. In terms of connectivity, we need to ensure that the Signature Areas are not perceived to be separate, autonomous entities operating at a distance from the campus community.
- Overall, we are missing a clear purpose for the Signature Areas. Why do they exist? What benefit are they in the long run and to whom?
- The Signature Areas, as they stand, are not so representative of the expertise on campus, which leads to frustration and a sense that research is not valued. I have heard this from faculty directly.
- *As a group, we reviewed the document prepared by K Chad’s team regarding the history of the Signature Areas.*
 - I feel the history document is useful but it really doesn't capture the sentiment of most faculty around the Signature Areas. Most faculty want to see a rethink around them.
 - We needs more focus on interdisciplinarity in these Signature Areas.
 - Perhaps “Interdisciplinarity” can be a Signature Area itself.
 - I can see advantages to this. We need to motivate the allocation of tangible resources from the institution for interdisciplinary scholarship, which is prioritized by the University Plan.
- Current signature areas still mostly valid
- VIDO, world class institute, this was highlighted during the pandemic and should be a signature area, within One Health or on its own
- One Health important, pandemic highlighted this
- Public understanding of One Health seems lacking; education needed
- Fit within One Health not clear for some units (e.g. dentistry)
- Synchrotron, mixed experience about how approachable it is re projects/applied research
- Should the synchrotron be a tool rather than a signature area, to be used by several signature areas? Should this signature area be more broad to include other types of imaging?
- What is the purpose of signature areas? – allocate funding, market the university – clarity around this question may be helpful and also how success is measured
- What if your research does not fit into the signature areas
- Where is the place for social sciences, humanities, arts

- Global pandemic has made us realize more that we have a world class facility in VIDO that has now received a bunch of cash to expand its horizons. It could fit under One Health, but could it be a standalone area.
- Some group members like One Health as it encompasses much of what they do – lots going on in this area on campus and the pandemic has illustrated the importance. The ‘triangle’ of One Health components has been exemplified in the pandemic. One Health is an easy fit for veterinary researchers.
- Synchrotron – questions in the group as to whether it is functioning as intended as many people seem to be accessing synchrotron services elsewhere. Should this really be a signature area? Varied experiences in the group ranging from very negative (no work able to be completed with CLS) to very positive (citing quick turnaround and good service with vetting project and getting scheduled into the queue). Some have went to synchrotrons in other countries to get the work done. Seems to be some issues related to ‘user-friendliness’ and broad applicability. Access restricted when wanting to scan large animals even though they seem to have the capability.
- Could Synchrotron Sciences be expanded to include the many other kinds of imaging that we are doing? This would require renaming, but could help to showcase others’ work.
- Alternatively, should synchrotron be its own area, or is it actually supporting/crossing over with some of the other areas (who is using it and how does it tie into the other signature areas)
- The name of a few signature areas may not be the best - what does One health mean to the rest of the population, the lay population? Also, Indigenous Peoples sounds as if researchers are studying this population, rather than an implying an inclusive approach
- Change is needed as there is feeling amongst many faculty that if your research doesn’t fall within a signature area that your research is not a priority for the institution.
- has anyone in OVPR analyzed the impact in each signature area? In terms of publications, personnel trained, community impacts, impact on indigenous communities. – i.e. quantitative indicators of the 6 signature areas.
- Unclear to some group members as to why we have signature areas - is it to allocate funding, to market the university? Better understanding of this would help to provide meaningful comments.
- What is the intent of having signature areas going forward? What does USask hope to gain/achieve by having signature areas or similar groupings? Who will it benefit? How will it benefit them? What are tangible outputs/outcomes of having the signature areas?
- How will you be able to measure if the areas have been effective or appropriate if the intent of having them is not clear?
- How are the signature areas different than the OVPR Research Strategic Plan, USask Strategic Plan?
- More communication is needed on what is encompassed in the new signature areas as they are developed. Current information does not provide any detail for those visiting the website.
- Those working in central roles are much more focused on the signature areas than colleges/schools/centres/other units. Many people in college don’t know the university has signature areas of research or why they are important. This is often true of strategic plans at a university. They are intended to trickle down and inform operations and activities, but are not actually part of daily operations for most people.
- There is little awareness outside the university that we have signature areas
- Report put out by OVPR Karen Chad has a lot of great information
- Facilitating and ensuring that the legal office will be able to provide the support so you can get the stuff done, to get the research done.
- Fine arts and humanities
- Signature Areas are very science based. I think that does not reflect the community of researchers on this campus.

- These areas need to be more inclusive of the rest of campus; lots research that is not included (i.e. ESB). Re-examine the list of priorities.
- COVID and InterVac might suggest a signature area that is more about diseases and pathogens (plant and animal). We have an enormous amount of infrastructure to bring to bear on diseases.
- Also something that other non-hard sci areas can use as a focal point. Half of my colleagues on this campus are not in science.
- Medicine is not so far away from business and we've seen that recently with big Pharma.
- ESB would say there are no signature areas relevant to them
- Six signature areas have served an important purpose for us to attract big grants and to get us into the U15, etc.
- Something doesn't capture everyone here as 36% faculty don't identify so we need to capture more of faculty.
- I think about discovery a lot. A word like "discovery" is more broad. Basic discovery is so important. Emergent knowledges?
- Discovery is deeply tied to colonial thinking so could be discovery and creativity perhaps
- It would be nice to know what other U15's have in terms of signature area.
- Difference in funding structures for science versus project funding for other areas; so I can see how the Univ was being strategic in the signature areas
- There is a way in which existing structures tend to minoritize some knowledges (Indig Peoples is one of that) so we have systems that ignore the creative solutions that are minority knowledges.
- We need a space for the work that everyone else has to do on decolonization. This is a welcoming term.
- Diversity of diverse knowledges could be a signature areas
- 11-25% of the worlds military budgets to provide free public health and public education to all the peoples of the worlds
- Tremendous extinction of species that is happened in the world since the 1960s .
- We need a specialization around interdisciplinary: something that creates space for that interD foment.
- "Indigenous Peoples" should be renamed because it is prone to mis-understanding that we are researching Indigenous Peoples.
- Signature areas should be aligned with teaching areas in degree programs so that resources translate down to a better student experience as well. So it isn't just the network of the researchers' students that get the value add.
- Need to think about student avenues and pathways
- It is powerful for me to hear everyone's perspective....my colleagues here.
- Measurement itself is a form of touch.
- How do we bring things into a space, how do we come to know things that already are?
- Hexagon research institute at McGill - useful model of looking at how people How to bring arts (lateral thinkers) , engineering and practical sciences together
- Artistic practice is central to health. If you look at how the WHO defines wellbeing, I could see my artistic work fitting into any of these signature areas
- Focus on equity will ensure that diversity is present and structures will therefore shift.
- Although we are doing well in the Indigenous Peoples signature area, there is still lots of room for improvement. We need to use an Indigenous lens when recruiting new faculty/CRCs to make USask the centre of excellence for Indigenous research. To build linkages, new faculty should get an introduction to whose lands these are, who are the people that lived here since time immemorial. The Indigenous perspective is still being excluded from critical documentation (e.g., the EDI policy).

- There needs to be better interconnectivity and communication between the signature areas themselves and colleges/departments/institutes across campus.
- We would like to see more transparency with budgetary decisions to ensure equity when there are budget cutbacks.
- We need more work in the area of food sovereignty and food security. We need proper supports for students as their challenges vary and their success rate is directly correlated to housing, food, freedom from violence, etc. and this needs to be a priority otherwise teaching and learning is not effective.
- From the Indigenous perspective, there is a lot about Indigenous research and Indigenous health research and Indigenous student participation, requirement of faculty that University isn't doing well..strategic strength. Looking at the Indigenous population in Canada, it should be here or Manitoba that should be the centre of excellence, so the University has to ante up more. Every CRC or new recruit should have the Indigenous lens added to recruitment (understanding of National commitment to Indigenous people and reconciliation); could be strength. I'm not as familiar with other signature areas, but wish there were better interconnections. I've heard about the light source work with Indigenous plants, but I didn't know about this or that it is something I could be considering. Somehow we need interactions...stronger interconnections.
- Speaking to interconnectivity...signature areas have been wildly successful and shine from administrative attention that they received, but need to be better connected instead of siloed. Although it is important to have precise set of goals and objectives, which demands focus, but there is a lot to be gained by promoting interconnectivity. The signature areas need better connectivity with the university itself. They somehow seem to operate on their own terms away from the rest of the university. Water security, food security, they are in their own corners of the university operating autonomously. Improving connectivity between colleges, departments and these institutes could then speak to something we are all doing and participating in.
- I would also like to put emphasis on connectivity...climate change, pandemic, other challenges, work of different disciplines, people with different perspectives, reconciliation and Indigenous communities. I think all of the signature areas are fine, but although USask has been successful, what is missing is how we communicate. With the pandemic, we are working from different perspectives. How can we work better and communicate our findings at the university level? How can we make research have a greater impact? We need to find connections...connecting with people and beneficiaries of research.
- In terms of equity and Indigenous belonging, (I've been here 25 years) what I have seen isn't really equity. When there are budget cutbacks, they are equally distributed across units, but for smaller units, there needs to be recognition that some departments are more unequal in terms of considerations. All is not rosy in the Indigenous academy...big blow up in education. I sat in on the Agriculture Signature Area discussion...what is being done in agriculture to address food insecurity wasn't on the radar so that is troubling. Although that is not the only area the food issue is being addressed and water research area. To build linkages, new faculty should get an introduction to whose lands these are, who are the people that lived here since time immemorial. As an executive member of the Canadian association of university teachers, the legal professors' organization conference is building substantive links with First Nations organizations and legal researchers in the area of food sovereignty and food security. I would like to see SK more active in reaching out. Finally, we need to be better informed of the university budget and why those decisions are being made due to budget cuts. How can we be more active? It is a job for all faculty, part of own destination...strengthen administrative voice to more lobbying power. Student challenges...teach Indigenous and non-Indigenous...success rate is direct correlation for housing, food, freedom from violence...Is teaching and learning effective? Not everybody comes equal to class-historical baggage and we need to put things in place to succeed. We have ITEP SUNTEP, Native Law Centre-we are leaders but generations need to understand that and how we continue this way.

- EDI, sex and gender are such big things and I feel we take a siloed approach. These mean different things from an Indigenous perspective. I don't see the Indigenous perspective included in the EDI policy.
- I would like to throw my hat into the ring with something brewing on campus...the theme of quantum innovation which involves math, computing, physics, engineering, but has philosophical and ethical consideration and humanities. There is a critical mass of faculty and students, postdocs, trainees on campus that are exemplified by quanta research on campus so nearing stage of signature area...alignment with regional and national priorities as the federal government is committing \$X over 5 years to prioritize quantum computing/sensing and other opportunities to align with national priority and a significant injection of funding to the university as a result.
- College of Education has been engaged in Indigenous research and we have strong and pre-eminent scholars in several areas. We talk about EDI and equity over and over and interdisciplinarity, but the biggest challenges are that these are not siloed...talk about global health and wellbeing of the planet. Many areas are tied in: mental health, food security, student success and from the student wellbeing perspective. There is leadership and policy, economics-how do health programs work in this area...sustainability is a huge piece that devolves to ecology, but it is much broader and the pandemic emphasized that. Critical point where our research could align. Governments talking about mental health, but so intertwined with many different things: emotional health, social needs, climate change is wrapped into all this, eco-friendly, the planet's health and our health, food security and global water security. It is nice to have big approaches and signature areas, but the next step is how to draw people to the wicked challenges of the planet to bring in signature areas. How draw people's research from specific EDI focuses-what should that look like? How do we leverage that and move beyond conversation? What should be new planetary health and global health...
- Why are we looking for new areas if already doing well? Mentioned things doing well, but just need to be strengthened. Looking at signature area being how do we interconnect well...Malcolm among first Indigenous PhDs-he chose to do his Post doc at Israel ? institute as it was at the leading edge of interdisciplinarity...leading minds in interdisciplinarity studied years ago-could look at it as an area of study and build connections and smart people.
- These discussions are fascinating. I could think of different topics and areas. Probably now is important to define cross-cutting areas...if I can add one more it would be more philosophical with what Steven mentioned. The essential element of life is being happy-philosophers years ago-something basic and managed to show that being happy is a challenge individuals and groups face and is a cross-cutting area. We need food, water, technology, energy to be happy...something more like signature area or a cross-cutting element...urban planners work-we should discuss the type of cities we want to live in in the future; collecting elements respond to people's needs to be happy, the way they define happiness.
- Also, research around flourishing and what does that look like? Information on elements of social sciences and humanities are not as well represented apart from the Indigenous signature area. There are great opportunities to have other social sciences and humanities engaged if we go that direction. Need to use interconnectivity...
- The economics of happiness that many academics may frown upon, but concept of happiness is primary in economic development...Swampy Cree also has worldview of living the good life...looked at I knowledge systems-not new knowledge...there is a space urgently needed. Life is tough: unemployment 80-90%, resources disappearing, suicide-youth have lost the will to live...there are pockets of others. We need to respond to human needs; we currently create capital for people who already have too much. We are teetering on the brink of environmental disaster...lost hundreds. Universities are poised to do kick-ass research and development and are doing some, but we need to look at how we can be even better to save the planet and our own people would lobby to reflect Indigenous concepts of wholism and taking care of vulnerable and betterment of entire community

instead of big fat bank account instead of peat moss mining that is thousands of years to grow so people can have green lawns.

- Much as the pursuit of happiness is important...elders talk about living well with first mother and planet and responsibility of wellness for future generations

What new or emerging areas could USask adopt as a signature area?

- quantum innovation. Very broad term. Spillover every pod of human activity including medicine without a doubt. What is quantum innovation? 5-6th year since people in physics were awarded for discovery of quantum materials – conductance and lack of resistivity – specific and subtle construction. One of many aspects – important part of innovation is impact on computing and fast computers will have tremendous societal consequences and for other areas. Acquiring info in split seconds. Defence and encrypting information. Quantum supremacy. Chinese produce larger quantum computer – race is on. Why? We are reactive as a university – we like to respond to the needs of the province and maybe federal government. We have to be anticipatory – forward thinking – going to have a tremendous impact – especially on jobs – have to be created and the uni should be at forefront of producing and suggesting new areas even if there is no industries of such yet in SK – this will change. Federal gvt already recognizing this – quantum innovation is an enormous opportunity for the uni. Happening already but we are not behind yet. We have quanta – institute for quantum materials – already have young people excited about this direction. Major breakthrough – we’d join the best universities in the world at this new area.
- equity in the discussion of health and the social determinants of health. Instead of picking a discipline – it’s a concept that people can connect into from a wide variety perspectives. Broad definition of health, but also thinking about concepts of equity. Mine would be on social justice or justice related issues. Meghna’s comment on global impact – I think that’s great but I would encourage us to not forget about our local place and communities. We can go from local to global and often they are interconnected. Idea where scholars who are not in the sciences could find a place where they could meet each other and work together.
- link between global and local. SDG’s address all sorts of concepts might be a really good way to weave into the signature areas.
- impact assessment act – involves social and cultural wellbeing. Also should base the signature areas around concepts and methods. Equity, or engaged scholarship as examples instead of a particular topic like water security.
- based on themes – yes – non-specific but that’s really why we are here. From my perspective – this university offers an unparalleled opportunity for us to work with each other. In CoM we have the mingling of minds – brings together clinicians and basic sciences. We want people from humanities and business schools and others places around campus to come together. We will drive this origins of health theme anyway, but we need to create opportunities and environments and collaborative groups to address societal groups.
- having signature areas – if you don’t see yourself fitting in them you don’t feel like you are a priority to the university. Concepts and focusing on collaboration and opportunities and social justice and how they come together to support the concepts rather than forcing focus on the discipline or topic.
- to what extent do you see balance between what fed govt wants to promote and provincial growth play – does it drive research, or compromise? What signals does govt send to institution./
- my understanding is that the sig areas are devised by the govt – while I think that its clear that we have a responsibility to address indigenous issues and agriculture and the synchrotron and water perhaps – whether mining is something we should be embracing – I think you’re right in acknowledging that govts have to be part of the plan, but from my perspective a robust signature area that addresses

societal concerns – health and wellbeing, will matter to govt and create new economically viable opportunities – we in healthcare are interested in misery, and govts more interested in money – we can't be insular and just be insular academic collaborators we need to collaborate with ogvts and legal system and education system and ... because we're a small province (benefit?) we have the potential to expand our tent beyond the academic institution – but we should conceptualize and inspire others to engage.

- serves all members of community – equity
- remember the discussion when the concept of signature areas – around 2002 – funding issue was a driving force. Argument was that creating sig areas from prov and fed govts were a driver of this whole sig area ideas. Look at report of Karen Chad – how much funding it attracted – talking about dollars constantly – because of the ever decreasing % budget we get – we have to find new sources of funding and signature areas were supposed to help with that. In USA – didn't know much about Canada but interested in math – book appeared from MIT – back cover place for author and Victor Kat MIT – from Moscow – and Robert moody from Saskatchewan – for many years that I had impression that Saskatchewan was a city in Canada. We need to focus on excellence – but in UNIVRS you have to click on whether it applies to signature areas – we have a lot of work to do to encourage young people to do excellent work regardless of whether they fall into category of signature area.
- Fine Arts! They have been summarily ignored by the Signature Areas, I'm afraid.
- Many themes, including the arts, may fit under “Saskatchewan” umbrella that Merle had mentioned.
- This is a real opportunity to expand the vision for the Signature Areas and to include themes and directions that have either been traditionally ignored despite their strength or which are newly emerging and need to be nurtured and incubated, focusing all the while on the talent in, and problems faced by, Saskatchewan.
- I echo these thoughts. As an example of a newly emerging theme and pool of talent, Saskatchewan-based researchers are exploring Quantum Innovation and its interface with other disciplines. Quantum science has been prioritized as part of a new National Strategy by the Federal Government, who will distribute nearly 400M CAD over the next 5 years to universities and start-ups that heed the call of quantum research. In line with this, I would like to foster a “Quantum Silicon Valley” in this province. With quantum innovation comes ethical questions and artistic inspiration. There are opportunities for collaboration with social scientists and humanities scholars. The quanTA Centre here has existing collaborations with USask musicians. The possibilities are limitless.
- I support this direction. Quantum computing and its ethical questions connect, for example, to the ethics of artificial intelligence. I have been exploring this question in collaboration with the Wellcome Trust in the UK. The potential for AI to uncover hidden health determinants is vast and is part of a broader theme of wellness in this province and beyond.
- Wellness is a good umbrella term for many ideas we have discussed today. I certainly would like to see this theme represented in new Signature Areas.
- I also see Clean Energy as an emerging theme. This has connections to both Quantum Innovation and Nuclear Innovation. I think our institution and province are uniquely poised to develop these themes.
- I would say that Clean Energy has connections to the existing area Energy and Mineral Resources. Would it fit under that?
- I would like Clean Energy to be more focused and have a definite time period of activity associated with it. It would have precise goals and researchers would be mobilized in an interdisciplinary way around the problem.
- New possible areas: chronic inflammatory disease, ageing; toxicology – cross disciplinary, fit with a lot of areas within USask; food security
- Fill gaps with revisions or new areas; focus on strengths now, but with a lens of ambition for the future.

- Are we trying to be everything to everyone – masters of none concept - we have so much capacity in diverse areas – medical school, vet school, dental school, synchrotron, cyclotron, water and food security institutes, toxicology center, etc. We have all the pieces and we are unique with all the professional colleges, but we are still a smaller institution so how can we do everything well and be known for everything?
- Recruitment standpoint – be the university the world needs – how can be possible have the resources to be all to everyone? What are the strengths and are we overselling our ability to achieve in so many areas.
- We want to be what the world needs, but what about the needs of our more local stakeholders. There are many competing priorities when there are multiple stakeholders.
- Difficult for people when they don't feel a close fit to the mandate (goals and vision) of their organization, which is what some view signature areas as.
- Signature areas are about positioning the university, so leadership has to decide what this looks like and why it is necessary.
- Toxicology program is the most comprehensive program in Canada and is top ranked in the world. Work crosses a lot of areas – indigenous, water security, food security. It may not have the capacity for its own signature area, but is there a way to incorporate this to highlight it as part of another area. i.e. an environmental focus to a signature area could stretch across various disciplines
- Indigenous signature area is obvious to retain in some way as our provincial demographics are only going to increase. Should be #1 priority and maybe needs to be more than a signature area that weaves in and out of others.
- Many health sciences researchers can't see themselves in the One Health area. On the clinical side it is unusual for a College of Medicine not to have a neuroscience and clinical area of research. Potentially a focus on Chronic Diseases and Aging could appeal to a broader range of researchers. Neurologic diseases are taking off – which could loop in with the aging focus.
- Community based signature area could be good addition - communities could encompass Indigenous populations, aging populations, the spirit of community in our province and be a way to weave many disciplines all together.
- Community focus would be interdisciplinary to have a full range of our scholarly works represented – sustainable communities, thriving communities. Is there anything that can be 'more Saskatchewan'. Saskatchewan doesn't exist on much on the landscape in terms of competitive edge - tends to still be a 'fly-over' between BC and ON in many cases. Maybe more focus could help with that.
- Potential for outreach and community engagement - communicating the science to stakeholders – how does knowledge move through the to be impactful and understood by communities.
- More opportunities to integrate different disciplines and to create community across the campus. Could this provide some opportunities for more people to participate?
- Interdisciplinary work could be enhanced.
- Quantum Innovation - We should be anticipatory – we should be looking forward in what we do – quantum science/quantum innovation is one of those things that's up and coming. It's something that will spill over every part of human activity. Will have an impact on computing, with tremendous societal consequences. We're reactive, but we should be anticipatory. This area would place us quite highly in the U15 group.
- Equity as a concept – interdisciplinary perspective. Important to try to find an area that people in the humanities, social sciences can relate to.
- Social Justice or Justice
- Impact, Equity – where they overlap is where it's impactful and beneficial to all
- Methodology, engaged scholarship

- Could create a signature area around a concept – then more people can see themselves in it – rather than just disciplines.
- New place of really defining emergence or interD. Building a mechanism for this cross-over to occur. Emergence.
- Even “knowledge” is a constraint. So perhaps Equity and Emergence and Creativity.
- Everyone has to be creative to do research
- Quantum innovation involves math, computing, physics, and engineering, but also has philosophical and ethical consideration and humanities. It is a national priority with funding committed by the federal government and is an area of research for many USask faculty, students, and HQP.
- Global and planetary health would bring together mental health, food security, student success and from the student wellbeing, sustainability (beyond ecology), emotional health, social needs, climate change. More emphasis on social sciences and humanities.
- We need to not only focus on individual signature areas, but interdisciplinarity, interconnectivity, and both people and the land. The philosophy of happiness and what makes people happy; how do we build cities for the future? Reflect the Indigenous worldview of living the good life and concepts of wholism, taking care of vulnerable people, the betterment of the entire community, and narrowing the divide between the rich and poor. We need to focus on living well with first mother and planet and responsibility of wellness for future generations.

What should be the next steps in renewing USask’s signature areas?

- There should be a formal call for renewal plans for existing Signature Areas and pitches for new ones. Both should highlight wins (small and big) that have occurred or will occur, challenges that have been faced or will be faced, and how the research landscape has changed or will change as a result of work in these areas. In particular, the response to the renewal call should address why an existing Signature Area should continue to be maintained.
- I support such a call and I think there should be a “critical mass” test built into the process: how many people across campus identify with the existing or emerging area? If this test falls below a certain threshold, then it can't go forward. Even if it surpasses the threshold, we need to look at the diversity of academic units involved in the area.
- I agree with Steven and Merle. In setting up such a call, proponents should identify what the student learning and research opportunities will be. Research and teaching go hand-in-hand and this has to be reflected through the potential impact on students. In general, we also need more celebration of success associated with research that is not in the Signature Areas. We cannot adopt the thinking that research and Signature Areas are synonymous, which I fear is what has been happening for many years.
- I also agree with the need for a "peer review" of Signature Areas. We also need to invite champions to come forward to represent areas as part of the renewal / pitch process.
- In the future highlight further - interdisciplinary approach; full range of scholarly disciplines represented; community, stable community, thriving community; community engaged/based research signature area; community-based scholarship
- Be more focused, consider combining several areas that are related under one umbrella – help promote and communicate externally what we are all about – integrate different disciplines
- Indigenous scholarship – should it be a signature area, or a common thread through all signature areas; maybe a great opportunity to broaden this with a focus on community engagement
- Next steps: collaboration; raise awareness of talent on campus; follow up on outcomes of signature area discussion (synthesis of information, summary document) and next steps; communication, make information more readily available

- Strategic plan – faculty role and how fit into that plan; what about faculty that don't fit into the signature area, must still feel equally valued
- Do everything here, professional colleges, etc. – have a lot of talent on campus, communicate this talent foster collaboration more
- Determining whether they are still the best mechanism for the university to show strength. Is there a different/better way? What are other universities doing?
- Need continued collaboration on this topic
- Follow up on what has come from the meetings – feedback, common themes and then continue a more focused discussion
- Listening is great for those starting in new positions , but quickly need actionable items to come from the consultation
- Identifying commonalities and seeing what it distills down to
- Communication needs to be improved once plans have been made – there is not enough information on each area to get a clear understanding.
- What will the branding be for the new areas/approach?
- How will the revised/new approach support the goal or being what the world needs, while still focusing on what our more local stakeholders need. For those who have multiple stakeholders and funding agreements this is a balance.
- Make the intent of the signature areas clearer to everyone – get people to understand why they exist, and whether they should be trying to fit into them. Some feel they try to fit to get more attention from the university in terms of funding support etc. Faculty want to see some benefits in aligning themselves to these areas.
- Rather than focusing on signature areas and disciplines that maybe only a small number can see themselves in, see some themes and concepts focused on social justice, health/wellness, etc. that multiple people and disciplines can see themselves in, where these current signature areas fit in.
- A robust area focused on economic development, social justice, impact, equity will also resonate with the government.
- Can't just collaborate as academics, but have to collaborate with our governments, legal system, education system...
- Keep putting focus on excellence!
- I am so mindful that we are heading into a period of flat budgeting and a certain amount of contraction will take place. We will have to learn to work together well. Sometimes the structures get in the way.
- If we identify one, two or three new signature areas while we are contracting, we will have to be very strategic to make these meaningful. Get very serious about connecting research and pedagogy. We have to get structures out of the way so we can work better together. We need the processes to have these discussions in a timely way because we've got two years of COVID fiscal recovery to regroup to Be the U the World Needs. I want to see a process that helps us roll up our sleeves, get to work, in a contracted fiscal reality.
- A signature area: by definition, signature areas need to be exclusive – to be about a particular area of knowledge area. So we need more signature areas, but not broadly defined signature areas. Add a few more signature areas.
- Intradisciplinary
- OVPR should have a structure that is associated with each signature areas; develop that in the OVPR.
- We need to use our position and power to influence government to focus on social housing, investment in food, invest in people, fund safe injection sites, etc. to make life more equitable.
- An evaluation/review of the successes and challenges, how the research landscape has changed over the last 10 years, and whether these areas are still warranted would be beneficial. That could be followed by a call for new pitches for the signature areas to say what you think the discoveries will be,

how the landscape will change in the next 10 years. We would need a framework for renewal of existing ones and implementation of new ones.

- The process should consider interconnectivity and interdisciplinarity and how we connect researchers working in similar areas. It is important to look at Indigenous ways of knowing and doing (not just western). We need to connect with communities and the lands on which we have the privilege of existing and look at gathering once again on the land (post-COVID).
- Looking at how budgets can help facilitate some of the areas raised. We have been dealt a terrible hand by the provincial government and I am very vocal about that. The cost of not investing in communities...jail is over full, but they invested in a remand centre...what about social housing, investment in food, invest in people, fund safe injection sites. It breaks my heart as a grandmother and academic. It is everybody's responsibility for a safe community. There is so much suffering-public pressure is one thing, research and development is another. We need to tell the premier we can't have these young lives decimated. We have the power and need to raise hell to educate ourselves to make life more equitable in the streets and academy.
- The next steps in the process for renewing the signature areas...the current ones came to existence through a rigorous process... we need proponents to let us know the successes and challenges, how the research landscape has changed over the last 10 years and whether these areas are still warranted-a period of review. I would like to see a call for new pitches for the signature areas to say what you think the discoveries will be, how landscape will change in the next 10 years. We need a framework for renewal of existing ones and implementation of new ones.
- The way of process of renewing signature areas. If that wasn't part of the previous process, working on connections. Identify where connections are and what they look like would define areas in a better way. Signature areas is how we connect signature areas at same time.
- I would build on Oscar's point. I don't know who else is working in the field of global health, looking from sustainability and mental health as well as planning cities-research around green spaces and promoting mental health. Are people ...having sig are and attracting team....should have call for proposals/pitches to pull together research from across campus to come into that space and proposed something together. Interconnectivity and interdisciplinarity is the way to move forward.
- Renewal and evaluation is important. It is important to look at Indigenous ways of knowing and doing and not just western. Need to connect with communities and lands on which we have the privilege of existing. End of COVID and getting to gather on the land in ceremony. More than flourishing, focus too much on human aspect...

Office of the Vice-President Research

Signature Area Engagement Sessions

Thematic Summary

June 2021



About the Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research

Who we are

The Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research (CHASR) is a unique university-based research support and consulting service. Operating on a cost-recovery basis, CHASR regularly engages and support academic-based researchers from a variety of disciplines, backgrounds, and institutions, government (federal, provincial, and municipal) and NGO clients, and private sector firms.

What we do

With a broad range of experience, expertise, and tools at our disposal, CHASR supports a diverse array of applied and social research. We support all phases of research, including data collection, data processing, data analysis, and reporting. Our in-house supports and tools enable us to lend unique and innovative approaches to all CHASR-supported research.

How we do it

At CHASR, we understand that no two research projects are alike. With an experienced and dedicated staff and access to eight distinct, yet complementary research laboratories, we are well-positioned to nimbly support research projects and programs of all shapes and sizes. We approach each project with a personalized, customized, and tailored solution.

For More Information about the CHASR

To learn more about CHASR, please contact us or visit our website: <https://chasr.usask.ca>

Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research (CHASR)

University of Saskatchewan
Room 260 Arts Building 9 Campus Drive
Saskatoon SK Canada S7N 5A5
Telephone: (306) 966-7546
Facsimile: (306) 966-8819
Email: chasr@usask.ca

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Executive Summary

The University of Saskatchewan has six Signature Research Areas: Agriculture, Energy and Mineral Resources, Indigenous Peoples, One Health, Synchrotron Sciences, and Water Security. In May of 2021, the Office of the Vice President Research (OVPR), The Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic (OVPA) hosted nine online engagement sessions with faculty and staff discuss the current state and future directions of the university's signature areas. Those who were unable to, or chose not to, voice their opinions during the sessions had an opportunity to provide their thoughts via a post-event online survey. Notes from these sessions and surveys were analyzed for themes and are summarized in this report.

Section 1 focuses on the general discussions around the current Signature Areas. From these discussions, it became clear that participants had many questions about how to define pre-eminence and success in each of the areas, what the goals or vision of the Signature Areas are for the University, and whether the Signature Areas should be shifted to realign with the changing research landscape. As such, the following themes emerged:

- Pre-eminence is difficult to determine without fully understanding the objectives or each signature area, and the signature areas more broadly. However, it is possible to identify pockets of success in each area.
- There needs to be clear metrics of success in place in order to determine how effective each Signature Area is.
- Evaluation and reform/renewal is necessary given the changing priorities and needs locally and globally. Participants proposed numerous new areas of focus – these often had strong links with many disciplines and alignment with sustainability and/or Indigenous communities.
- Labels and language are extremely important. Ensure input and a bottom-up approach to establish inclusivity in any new Signature Areas.

Participants also felt that each Signature Area lacked, and was in desperate need of, leadership in order to drive success by steering or facilitating **key strategic directions**:

- Facilitating and enhancing research collaborations
- Communication and outreach to promote successes, communicate opportunities, and develop external partnerships.
- Targeted fundraising and investment for growth in each area.
- Establishing expertise through recruitment and retention and graduate student opportunities and scholarship. Certain areas are facing retirements and succession planning is needed.

A key area was the ramping up of collaborative and interdisciplinary work, citing that big problems require interdisciplinary solutions. Much work is still performed in silos, and many participants felt this was hampering any chance at being pre-eminent.

Section 2 lists the overall themes from the Signature Area-specific discussions. Many of these overlapped strongly with those from the general discussions.

Section 3 is a one-page conclusion addressing whether pre-eminence was reached in the Signature Areas, what participants felt could bring the Signature Areas to the 'next level', and any other advice they may had to strengthen the Signature Areas.

Although barriers were identified and many needs highlighted, there was still an overall sense of optimism that the University of Saskatchewan will play a central role in overcoming local and global challenges if given the opportunity for faculty and researchers to be supported to do the work.

Methodology

Engagement Sessions

In May of 2021, the Office of the Vice President Research (OVPR) and the Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic (OVPA) hosted nine online engagement sessions with faculty and staff to discuss the success, strengths, and future directions of the University of Saskatchewan's (USask) six Signature Research Areas: Agriculture, Energy and Mineral Resources, Indigenous Peoples, One Health, Synchrotron Sciences, and Water Security. In addition to the six sessions dedicated to one Signature Area, three sessions were held to discuss Signature Areas in general.

Each session was limited to 150 people. Breakout room and roundtable discussion questions were circulated the week before each meeting. The format included the following questions:

Breakout Room & Roundtable Discussions

- Have we achieved pre-eminence in this signature area? Why or why not?
- How might we strengthen or better support this area? What would it take for us to bring it to the "next level"?
- What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding USask's signature areas?

Data

Each breakout room had one to two note-taker(s), and the general sessions also had at least one note-taker present. The result was approximately 95 pages of text. In addition to attending the sessions, participants were able to share further comments by completing a post-event online survey addressing the above questions for a specific Signature Area. Altogether, 57 surveys were completed.

Analysis

These notes were aggregated and sent to the Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Sciences for analysis, along with the survey results. All documentation (notes and survey) was uploaded into NVivo (version 12 Pro) and coded inductively to capture emergent themes. A theme is summarized as any strong topic raised by a number of individuals that was conveyed as a message or consideration around all or one Signature Area. In addition, any text that was speaking explicitly as a response to one of the proposed questions was also coded under the theme of that specific question.

Note: Due to the lack of standardization on verbatim note keeping, this report will not use exemplary quotes from the notes to support the themes (however quotes from the survey could apply). Word clouds will be used for a visual summary of themes and words for each individual Signature Area (presented in Section 2).

Section 1 – General Discussions

Overarching themes for all Signature Areas in general are presented in Section 1. Signature Area-specific themes are presented in Section 2.

1.1 Cannot Reach Consensus on Pre-eminence, Not Well Understood

There was no consensus reached as to whether the University had reached pre-eminence in its six Signature Areas. For example, some participants could list or discuss areas of success and shortfalls under each Signature Area; some felt that perhaps pre-eminence was reached at the local or regional level while feeling not enough had been done to foster pre-eminence nationally or internationally.

The key problem with being able to determine if USask had reached pre-eminence was the lack of clarity of what pre-eminence would look like in each Signature Area. Many questions were raised, asking for a definition and parameters:

I don't know what pre-eminence means with regard to this signature area. Define it and I will tell you if you have reached it.

Survey responses also carried as to the extent that participants agreed that the university had been successful or reached pre-eminence in each Signature Area (Table 1).

	Agree or strongly agree	Disagree or strongly disagree
AGRICULTURE n=13		
To what extent do you agree that USask's Signature Area strategy has been successful?	62%	31%
To what extent do you believe that USask has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area?	69%	31%
ENERGY & MINERAL RESOURCES n=7		
To what extent do you agree that USask's Signature Area strategy has been successful?	57%	43%
To what extent do you believe that USask has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area?	14%	86%
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES n=12		
To what extent do you agree that USask's Signature Area strategy has been successful?	50%	42%
To what extent do you believe that USask has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area?	42%	58%
ONE HEALTH n=9		
To what extent do you agree that USask's Signature Area strategy has been successful?	33%	56%
To what extent do you believe that USask has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area?	33%	56%
SYNCHROTRON SCIENCES n=12		

To what extent do you agree that USask’s Signature Area strategy has been successful?	67%	33%
To what extent do you believe that USask has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area?	50%	42%
WATER SECURITY n=4		
To what extent do you agree that USask’s Signature Area strategy has been successful?	75%	25%
To what extent do you believe that USask has achieved pre-eminence in this signature area?	100%	-

Table 1 – Distribution of Survey responses. Where values do not add up to 100%, there was missing data

1.1.1 Clarify the Objectives

With all and any of the Signature Areas, there were many questions posed about what pre-eminence actually meant within the context. Generally, many felt that ‘pre-eminence’ cannot be measured or judged at this point because it was unclear on what to base that judgement on. There is a lack of understanding around the scope, vision, and strategic purpose of the Signature Areas. In particular, **two key questions emerged:**

Are signature areas based on pre-existing strengths within USask or are they strategic areas in which USask was investing to become ‘the best’?

And:

Are signature areas designed for the institution (as areas of internal focus for driving excellence) or are they for external promotion?

Depending on the answers to the above questions, participants’ responses could differ as to whether they felt a certain Signature Area reached pre-eminence or not at this time point.

1.1.2 Determine the Metrics of Success

There was also great uncertainty on how to measure success in individual Signature Areas. There were multiple questions about metrics of success, which included, but were not limited to: community impact, funding and resources, publications, faculty/HQP recruitment, knowledge translation, community-engagement, and public scholarship.

1.2 Signature Area Renewal is Needed

There were multiple suggestions that the Signature Areas require a renewal document that can speak to the above questions and highlight successes as well as outline existing challenges. Renewal was deemed necessary by many as there was dissent in some groups as to whether Signature Areas are needed, whether the current Signature Areas are still relevant to the changing research landscape, and how to

determine potentially new Signature Areas going forward. The latter would need some sort of framework to ensure alignment with institutional, regional, and national priorities.

1.2.1 Accountability and Transparency

All Signature Areas going forward (whether the current areas are maintained or replaced) should comprise of action items to facilitate accountability and transparency. These action items should be centered on strategic priorities. Currently, the strategic priorities of Signature Areas are not clear, based on the questions asked in the sessions and outlined above.

1.2.2 Bottom-up or Hybrid Approach

In general, these areas can only be successful if there is a bottom-up approach involving encouraging areas that already have faculty activity, and hence buy-in. Simply declaring an area as a Signature Area and hoping that it will succeed is wishful thinking.

All of the work that needs to be done on clarifying the goals and strategies of Signature Areas for USask requires a bottom-up approach for at least four key reasons:

- **Language and labels are important.** There is a delicate balance in naming a Signature Area in meeting two challenges that were discussed in the sessions. The first challenge is establishing a term and label that is broad enough that large groups of scholars are not excluded and obvious collaborations can be created. The second is that the term and label is also specific enough so that people cannot misconstrue the focus. For example, there were concerns raised that One Health excluded human health, and therefore excluded most of the health sciences and also the College of Medicine. There were also conversations around feelings that Energy and Mineral Resources was poorly labeled, suggesting the two topics are not necessarily complementary. Additionally, the Indigenous Peoples Signature Area, to some, suggested that its name implied a focus on studying Indigenous populations, when it is known to have more breadth than that.
- **Signature Areas are not well defined** and are often too broad in scope and too narrow in phrasing to include faculty in all areas, including the social sciences, arts, and humanities. There were many instances of faculty feeling they could not align with an existing Signature Area.
- **New Signature Areas will require a critical mass test** to determine how many individuals at USask can contribute to, or align with, that area or areas.
- **Signature Areas with more interconnectivity can foster interdisciplinary collaborations and take down silos.** The sentiment in most of the discussions is that there were silos and ‘pockets’ of research and prestige that were underway. Although many of these had been considered successful, they did not allow for broader collaborations, or interdisciplinary collaborations.

As one survey participant highlighted, the current Signature Areas are a bit disjointed from the campus community, and the selected areas have raised feelings of exclusion:

...then hearing about [the Signature Areas], it made me feel like they were the only parts of the university that the University was proud of. I understand they are meant to be an umbrella and be inclusive of all related areas that fall under them... but it actually feels non-inclusive of all aspects on campus.

Throughout the discussions there were several suggestions for new or re-directed Signature Areas that could foster more inclusion with disciplines from across campus (these are discussed in Section 1.5)

1.3 Leadership is Required for Cohesion, Coordination, and Support

In nearly all discussions, there was emphasis that the Signature Areas lack leadership. With exception of a few individuals who may have achieved pre-eminence within a Signature Area, there was an indication that there are no leaders for any of the six areas. It was expressed that leadership is needed and that the key roles of leaders should be to facilitate collaborations, bring cohesion to the areas, measure success, and coordinate strategic decisions. This was repeatedly identified as a way to bring Signature Areas “to the next level.”

1.3.1 Strategic Directions

There was a sentiment that decisions made on Signature Areas going forward had to be completed strategically in order to achieve strides toward success and pre-eminence (however it is defined and measured). This speaks to the questions outlined in Section 1.1.1 (e.g., determining whether Signature Areas should be selected because they are areas of strength or desired areas of strength; appeal to the needs of the institution or beyond).

- **Funding and investment should be targeting Signature Areas.** There were numerous mentions about the importance of targeted fundraising and scholarships within the Signature Areas, if they are ever to achieve pre-eminence (however defined) at the University of Saskatchewan. However, there was acknowledgement of two considerations: first that the university has been operating under fiscal constraints for quite some time; second, that anyone conducting research outside of a Signature Area may be restricted with the funding required for their scholarly work. Many participants felt disenchanting from the Signature Areas simply because they could not ‘check a box’ in UnivRS, and were automatically excluded. Developing more inclusive Signature Areas would rectify this issue.
- **Expertise and succession planning are critical to ramp up future success.** Recruitment and retention of faculty members with expertise in gap areas will create a more fulsome approach to achieving success in each Signature Area. Some participants mentioned specific losses in recent retirements and a predictive shortage in imminent retirements. However, faculty were not the only group discussed. There were also numerous mentions of supporting graduate students,

creating innovative graduate programs that allow for interdisciplinary approaches to problems to develop cohesive solutions. Finally, there were criticisms that Signature Areas are harmful to academic freedom if faculty are forcing their research to ‘fit the box.’ Academics and research should align.

- **Clearer communication integral to outreach and promotion.** There was a reported lack of awareness of the Signature Areas, even within the university. Many wondered how successes were being communicated and promoted. Some participants complained that the website was inadequate and does little to promote the Signature Areas, nor provide clarity on what qualifies as success in the area. Additionally, there were those who felt the website should be bilingual (English-French) and/or include Indigenous languages.
- **Identifying potential collaborations across and within colleges/units which address Signature Areas.** This was highlighted as a missing function within the University. Many wanted to know what expertise exists, who would be willing to collaborate, and what resources were available. Most of the comments regarding leadership were tied closely to this need: leadership that can facilitate and coordinate connections.

1.4 Collaboration and Interdisciplinary Work are Key to Success

Some participants were able to speak to some pockets of success in the current Signature Areas, and often these comments were paired with a note on how collaborative and/or interdisciplinary work contributed to that success.

As a recent recipient of a large CIHR grant where I am collaborating with ... scholars and communities, I feel that I was able to do so because of the networking across USask colleges. However more work needs to be done to support multidisciplinary team engagement.

There were also numerous comments that large problems require interdisciplinary solutions. Suggestions that more interconnectivity between and within Signature Areas opens the door to a higher volume of potential collaborators. Some participants also highlighted the strength and opportunity for collaboration at the University of Saskatchewan. Additionally, tri-agency funding is targeting cross-disciplinary/network approaches to research.

Although the discussions favoured collaborative work, there were barriers raised by some. (e.g., existing siloed work; the perception that tenure and promotion requirements discourage collaboration or community-based work; lack of existing knowledge, resources, and people to collaborate with).

1.4.1 Information Resource for Internal Collaborations Would be Beneficial

There were many ways in which participants suggested the lack of knowledge of expertise on campus is a barrier, which could be reconciled by accessing a place (physical or virtual) where individuals or teams can find others with complementary expertise across campus. This could address any issues or concerns regarding critical mass in any one area, while also allowing collaborations to form organically. According

to at least one participant, the College of Medicine has already made progress in this area. Another suggestion was to hold events in which researchers can summarize work they are doing, or hoping to do, to faculty from across campus.

One participant who completed the survey suggested the following automated model:

When a researcher ticks off the [Signature Area] box as part of the UnivRS process, they are automatically enrolled or contacted if they are successful with their grant application – A lay summary for the successful grant could be provided by each researcher and these go into a [Signature Area] directory. These lay summaries would be compiled and made available to any researchers across campus who are interested in [Signature Area]. This is an easy way for us to know who else is working in [Signature Area], what their research is about, and whether they could be someone to collaborate with in the future.

Although a couple of participants spoke about this need being developed to support one specific Signature Area, most spoke about the idea more broadly, which would aid the provision of cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary collaborations that participants were citing as necessary for success. Therefore, a centrally located resource would be ideal.

Further, this research information resource centre could also address a gap in communications around projects and achievement. Although communications could still be directed and distributed from specific Signature Areas about successes and opportunities, a central location designed to foster connections was still appealing to many. As a few participants highlighted, it is difficult to achieve pre-eminence when no one knows what is being done, and many miss one-off announcements circulated via email.

There was a suggestion that Research Facilitators could play a key role.

This could also be a pertinent resource to any Signature Area leaders moving forward. There were many comments about the need for leadership, coordination, and support, and in order for leaders to achieve goals, resources need to be put into place to assist.

1.4.2 External Engagement and Collaborations

In order to ensure that the University of Saskatchewan is one ‘the world needs’, ensuring that Signature Areas align with the needs of the community is important. Fostering collaborations with external groups could increase fundraising, ensure relevance, be more easily measured in terms of community impact, and become more sustainable. There was some disagreement as to whether the Signature Areas needed to think more globally or address more local needs. However, there seemed to be more comments in favour of focusing on Saskatchewan and then expand.

1.5 Proposed New Signature Areas

Obvious links with other Signature Areas, strategic priorities, regional and international challenges were used as evidence that certain areas would be strong Signature Areas to consider in the future.

For example, those proposing Quantum Innovation highlighted that would incorporate a number of science, technology, engineering, and math-related disciplines, as well as connecting to medicine, social sciences, and the humanities. The critical mass at USask was also highlighted in this area. Another proposed Signature Area included work on climate change/ecology, including sustainable energy, sustainable development, human health, environmental health, social justice, and it matched significantly with USask and government priorities. Table 2 presents the suggested new signature areas throughout the discussions. Only those mentioned at least three times were included.

Potential areas of focus for new Signature Areas
• Climate Change / Ecology
• Computer Science / Data Science
• Economic Development
• Happiness
• Knowledge Mobilization
• Public Health / Community Health / Human Health
• Publicly Engaged Scholarship
• Quantum Innovation
• Social Issues / Social Justice
• Sustainable Development
• Value-added Processing

Table 2 – Proposed areas for future Signature Areas (≥ three mentions within the notes or surveys)

1.5.1 Sustainability and Indigenous Peoples → Signature Areas or Pillars?

Several participants argued that Sustainability and Indigenous Peoples served better as pillars or integrated concepts within all of the Signature Areas moving forward, as both serve as a crux to all future developments in the province.

On the next page is a concept map based on the themes from the discussions and surveys.

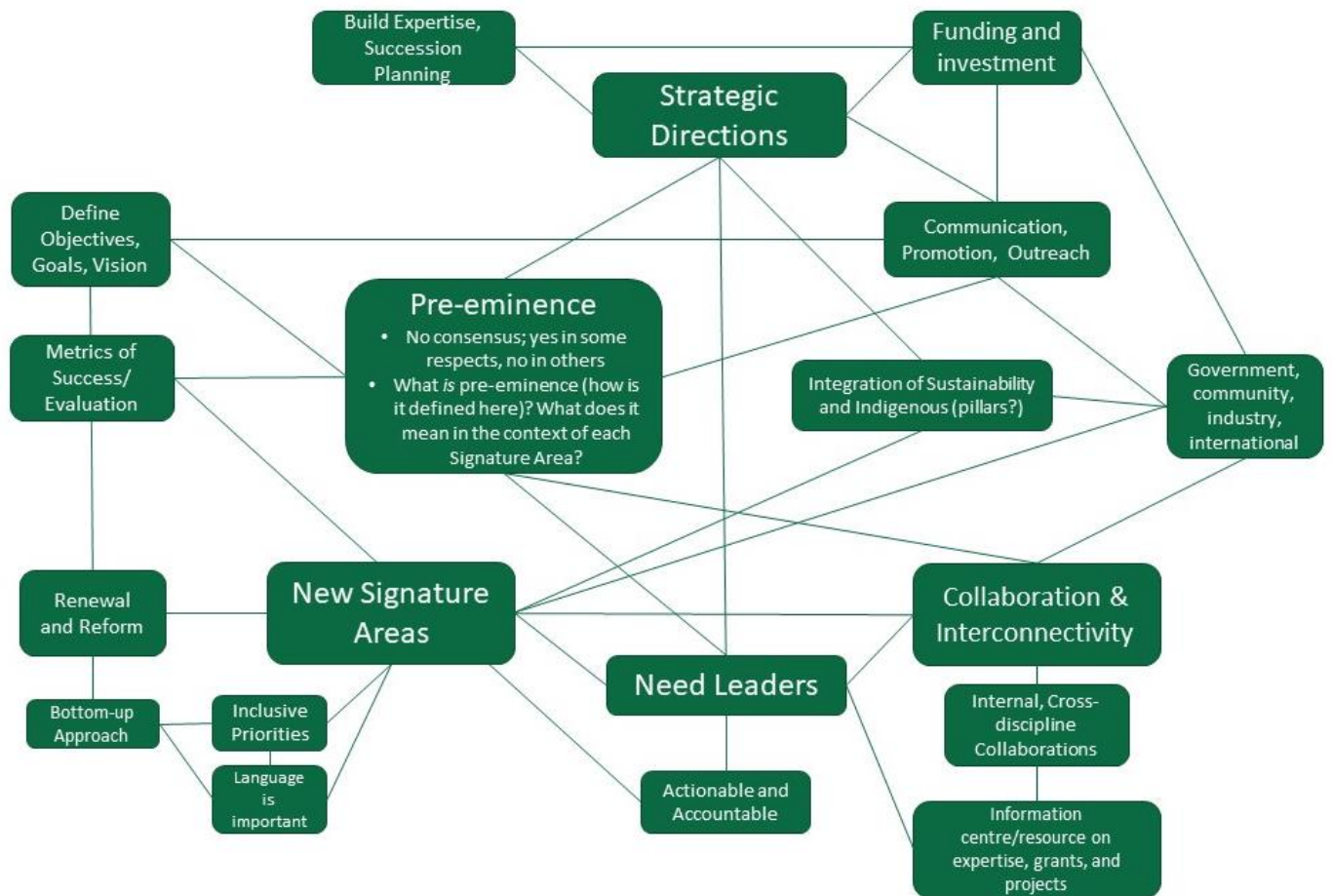


Figure 1 – Concept Map of Engagement Session Themes

Section 2 – Signature Area Discussions

For each of the six Signature Areas, bullet summaries on themes are provided. In addition, each Signature Area has a visual representation through a word cloud, capturing most frequently used stemmed words from the notes and surveys.

2.1 Agriculture: Food and Bioproducts for a Sustainable Future

Thematic Summary

- Of all the Signature Areas, Agriculture appeared to have the most evidence backing its success.
- Still a strong need to clarify metrics of success, unify players with a mission and vision, provide a roadmap to success.
- The topic of ‘agriculture’ is too broad and requires focus. ‘Jack of all trades and master of none.’
- Hire or appoint a leader or leaders in the Signature Area to coordinate and deliver on strategic initiatives.
- Targeted investments and leveraging partnerships with industry and government is needed. There does not seem to be a fundraising strategy in place. Investment for researchers, students (scholarships) and infrastructure are all needed for growth.
- Numerous areas of potential for focus and development, linking to other disciplines (e.g., safety, production, sustainability; food security). Plenty of connections to high impact areas.
- Some collaborations underway, but could be doing more to connect across disciplines. Bring people together to discuss the issues and how to address them.
- USask to do a better job in outreach and promotion – need a longitudinal communication strategy for both regional and international. Could start with the website.
- Hiring, retention, and recruitment of faculty *and* students will be critical – nothing can be done if there is not the expertise to do it. There were particular concerns in this area about recent and upcoming retirements as well as the faculty to student ratio.
- Think global, act local (focus on the needs and strengths of Saskatchewan).

2.2 Energy and Mineral Resources: Technology and Public Policy for a Sustainable Environment

Thematic Summary

- Energy and mineral resources should be parsed apart; mineral extraction does not equate to energy resources, and many felt that the two were not well matched together in one area.
- A strong push to renewable energy, more interest around nuclear, and the unique mineral portfolio in Saskatchewan creates a favourable environment for big opportunities.
- Cannot advance these areas without strong linkages, consultation, and partnerships with Indigenous communities.
- This Signature Area faces policy barriers – collaborations with industry and government can alleviate some of these, but there is also a need for driving forward the social sciences in this area. Currently, this is a huge gap.
- Establishing an Energy Centre will bring researchers together from across disciplines and focus what some consider disparate funding and siloed work in this area.
- Successes and strengths in this area need to be inventoried and communicated.
- Need to consider the importance of the food-water-energy nexus.
- Funding resources seem to fall short in this Signature Area compared to other universities.
- Numerous calls for establishing leadership in this area to drive and coordinate success.
- Faculty hires in this area often focus on filling undergraduate teaching. Strategic hiring and succession planning for research success is also needed.

2.3 Indigenous Peoples: Engagement and Scholarship

Thematic Summary

- Culturally and conceptually, the word ‘pre-eminence’ to measure success in this area is incorrect. Suggest ‘authenticity’ instead.
- Barriers to success in this area include the loss of Indigenous faculty, the time-intensive community relationship-building (which is not recognized or valued), the dominance of Western research methods and ways of knowing, and lack of congruency between requirements for tenure and promotion and Indigenous-focused research.
- This area had the strongest call for actionable work with a measurable impact in the communities it is meant to serve.
- Storytelling is important in this area – communication shortfalls on successes have occurred and require more narrative. The website should include Indigenous languages.
- Expertise and succession planning is dwindling with weak recruitment and retention supports for faculty and students.
- Training and mentorship is a gap across the campus. Researchers attempting to focus on this area without adequate training could do more harm than good.
- This is the only area that discussed the importance of student support (beyond funding).
- Signature Area lacks leaders, but there is also a lack of Indigenous people in leadership positions across campus. Again, leadership is needed to drive strategic directions and bring people together.
- Indigenous people and Indigenization should be integrated into all aspects – make a pillar rather than a stand-alone Signature Area.
- The funding for this area is weak – the Department of Indigenous Studies is very small.

2.4 One Health: Solutions at the Animal-Human-Environment Interface

Thematic Summary

- Area somehow excludes those conducting human health; College of Medicine disenfranchised from this Signature Area. This is considered a missed opportunity.
- Ironically, this Signature Area was identified as too broad and large, while also being exclusive.
- Signature Area has not generated a sense of community; often referred to as 'just a check box' on funding applications.
- Faculty in health fields are recognized as very busy; changes to workload, tenure and promotion requirements, and incentives for collaborative work across departments/colleges/units would drive more researchers to engage.
- This Signature Area included many comments about work happening in silos and suggestions for catalysts to take down the silos, primarily departmental reform, but also events and information hubs/centres/inventories.
- Leadership is needed. Again, this role would be to coordinate, facilitate, support, and drive strategic directions. There were also suggestions that this had to be a dedicated position or positions, and not add more work to an already overloaded faculty.
- Discussions regarding expertise and succession planning tended to focus more on mentoring early-career researchers. However the importance of getting students engaged at the undergraduate level (or earlier) was also mentioned.
- Increased communication at the institutional level about successes and opportunities, branding and outreach for increased investment, and promotion and education to the public to increase engagement in One Health.
- A general call for more institutional funding support was expressed, such as CREATE grants.
- Covid-19 pandemic shed light on the importance of One Health. Opportunities for more work in VIDO.

2.5 Synchrotron Sciences: Innovation in Health, Environment, and Advanced Technologies

Thematic Summary

- Pre-eminence in this Signature Area is likely not achievable on a national or global scale when competing with the largest centres in the world.
- The CLS and the University of Saskatchewan do not put on a unified front; the CLS should engage more with the University community.
- There is a lack of understanding and knowledge about how to engage with the CLS, what is happening there, and what the potential is (for linkages with other areas). Where there has been linkages (e.g., Agriculture, soil science) there has been notable successes.
- The Synchrotron Centre is not filling a leadership role in this Signature Area. Again, leadership is needed to coordinate, facilitate, communicate, and support research in this area.
- The CLS has brought in considerable investment in the past, but this is beginning to drop off. Strategic fundraising and investment is needed. Especially as considerations for CLS2 moving forward.
- Critical to engage in succession planning for this Signature Area. There needs to be more training opportunities for students and strategic hiring of faculty. Those faculty with expertise and capacity to access grant funds for infrastructure should be supported.
- Reported challenges as different groups vie for access; complicated relationships with the current system users.

Discussion overall had fewer notes than other sessions. The word cloud below, therefore, is based on the 50 most frequently used stemmed words, rather than 150.

2.6 Water Security: Stewardship of the World's Freshwater Resources

Thematic Summary

- Some felt that the work that is undertaken in this Signature Area rarely focuses on water security, but other aspects of water and water systems.
- Important to incorporate Indigenous perspective and understanding of water stewardship. Strong partnership and collaboration opportunities with Indigenous communities need to be captured.
- Given the important links to Indigenous culture, water security should incorporate more broadly the social sciences, as well as existing (or new) Signature Areas.
- Measuring impact and engaging in actionable work in the community in this Signature Area should be at the forefront of measuring success. Can think locally and apply globally.
 - Science → model development → applications
- Formulating new global, regional, and institutional partnerships and collaborations to take the work to the next level. This will need a strategic outreach and communication plan.
- Funding and investment is required namely to make the University of Saskatchewan a 'financially and scientifically exciting place to be.'
- There was a call for leadership to provide oversight and support to strategically build up the Signature Area.

Discussion overall had fewer notes than other sessions. The word cloud below, therefore, is based on the 80 most frequently used stemmed words, rather than 150.

Section 3 - Conclusions

There were some clear overarching themes that developed over the Signature Area Engagement sessions based on the key questions asked.

Has the University of Saskatchewan achieved pre-eminence in its Signature Areas?

Many session participants struggled with how to define and measure pre-eminence for the Signature Areas. For some Signature Areas (e.g., Indigenous Peoples, Water Security), there were those who felt that focusing on pre-eminence is doing a disservice to the core values of the Signature Area.

There was no consensus on whether pre-eminence had been achieved. Some stated yes, outlining examples of success, others felt that pre-eminence had been achieved at more local levels, rather than globally. Finally, many disagreed that enough had been done in each area to have achieved pre-eminence.

How might the University of Saskatchewan strengthen or better support Signature Areas? What would it take to bring it to the “next level”?

Essential to every Signature Area was the establishment of leaders whose main role would be to coordinate, facilitate and support research and strategic initiatives within and between Signature Areas. Those strategic directions usually included enhancing communication and outreach, facilitating collaboration, strategic fundraising or investment planning, building expertise and undergoing succession planning.

Participants suggested removing barriers to collaboration: tenure and promotion, departmental silos, lack of knowledge of what is being done on campus among other researchers, funding for collaborative projects, formation and support of research clusters.

What other advice do you have for senior leadership regarding the University of Saskatchewan Signature Areas?

There were many calls for evaluation and renewal of the Signature Areas, utilizing a bottom-up approach that can determine and apply language and labels that are inclusive to the broader campus community. Further, each Signature Area would be given a clear scope, goals and vision to which actionable goals could be planned.

There were numerous suggestions for new Signature Areas that are relevant to the emerging research landscape and could also play to Saskatchewan’s strengths. Participants also outlined clear linkages with multiple areas/disciplines as well as alignment with government initiatives.

Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research (CHASR)

University of Saskatchewan
Room 260 Arts Building 9 Campus Drive
Saskatoon SK Canada S7N 5A5
Telephone: (306) 966-7546
Facsimile: (306) 966-8819
Email: chasr@usask.ca