



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.