



I write this report on the tail of the CAGS annual conference with the theme Care, Social Justice and Inclusion and contemplating two plenary talks. Dr. Lynn McAlpine challenged us to think and act differently based on her studies of PhD career pathways and the need to instill “career literacy” in our students. Dean Kathy Hogarth spoke on EDID and provided a strong take home message of how universities hide in a “no data equals no problem” vacuum, and data collected without public reporting is a missed opportunity. The CAGS taskforce on TRC Calls to Action and Graduate Education reported on their preliminary recommendations for Decolonization including validation of Indigenous knowledge and identified key questions for addressing Indigenous self-identification processes for admission, scholarships and awards and creating national frameworks for mobility. I am reflecting how CGPS priorities can even better reflect these important national conversations.

### **Graduate Community**

The 2021 call for nominations for [USask's Distinguished Graduate Mentor Award](#) was released in early November and I encourage you to consider nominating a colleague. Last spring the DGMA Committee revitalized the criteria for the award underpinning the philosophy of mentorship alignment with the CAGS national award to which we nominate the successful recipient.

Student [vaccine compliance](#) is approximately 96%. Over the last several weeks we have been working closely with students and supervisors to close the gap. Students who do not follow [USask's COVID-19 safety measures](#) are issued study suspensions.

New Federal measures for travel to and within Canada that include showing proof of vaccinations along with proof of negative PCR test within 72 hours of entering Canada may impact the recruitment of students and postdoctoral fellows. [Information regarding this measure can be found here.](#)

In collaboration with Dean Kresta (Engineering), I appointed Dr. Jaswant Singh as Head of the Division of Biological Engineering. Dr. Singh. I am very grateful to Dr. Singh in taking on this very successful interdisciplinary division and the work ahead for better integration with the College of Engineering. Many thanks to outgoing head Dr. Gordon Sarty for his years of dedication to the Division.

### **Enhancing Experiences**

A new Graduate Bridging class is available to students who are conditionally admitted to a graduate program but require English Proficiency starting Winter 2022. Questions about this class can be directed to the [University of Saskatchewan Language Centre](#).

The developing CGPS-specific Indigenous Strategy can now be guided by the gifted [Indigenous Strategy](#), ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan. In late November, Interim Vice Provost Angela Jaime, Bob Badger and Matt Dunn of the OVPIE team will walk senior leaders of CGPS through the strategy and how it will uplift us as we move towards “transformative decolonization leading to reconciliation.”

### **Developing Flexibility**

The CGPS staff engaged in a series EDI professional development sessions [facilitated by Dr. Manuela Valle-Castro and team](#) and are looking forward to the next two Anti-Racism sessions.

Recently I was asked to provide a statement to *The Sheaf* in response to issues raised by graduate students on the timing of tuition payment deadlines and delayed remuneration student payments. The request provoked a conversation that resulted in a commitment to developing a better communications strategy among various campus service providers that have student payroll touchpoints with CGPS as a key conduit for these critical messages.

My sincere gratitude to the members of the Reimagine Graduate Funding Working Group – Maureen Bourassa, David Cooper, James (JD) Johnston, Angela Kalinowski, Heathy Lukey, Ian McQuillan and Michael Szafron. I look forward to sharing the proposal with various stakeholders through November and December and gathering feedback.