

USask

Achieving Inclusive Academic Excellence



The CGPS will facilitate and support the growth of its student body; strengthen its services by adopting a strategic approach to recruitment, enrolment, and retention; and discover ways to be flexible through updating policies and procedures.

Creating Knowledge & Skills



Preparing graduate students beyond traditional degree outcomes. To support them as scholars and global contributors prepared for a variety of career paths. CGPS will look for ways to challenge the status quo through program innovation, elevating equity, and decolonization, and work toward a lasting impact on our community and future graduates.

Rejuvenate Relationships



CGPS will bolster its value proposition and shared story; and connect USask's graduate community in a vibrant community of practice.

BOLD & AMBITIOUS.



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Graduate
and Postdoctoral Studies

GRAD.USASK.CA

Distinguished Learners



The world needs a university whose graduates have the drive, the curiosity, and the humility to work with others in addressing the greatest challenges and opportunities the world faces.

Productive Collaboration



The world needs a university in which research and innovation are inspired by and accountable to community partners.

Meaningful Impact



The world needs a university resolutely committed to measuring its own success in terms of the aspirations of the communities it serves.

Transformative Decolonization Leading to Reconciliation



The world needs a university in which Indigenous concepts, methodologies, pedagogies, languages, and philosophies are respectfully woven into the tapestry of learning, research, scholarship, creativity, and community engagement.

Global Recognition



The world needs a university that sets the standard in learning, research, scholarship, creativity, and community engagement.

GOALS

1

Commit to robust student information systems

Support strategic enrolment management & recruitment.

2

3|4

Commit to improved and equitable systems, policies, processes, and service standards.

Motivate and support program innovation.

5

6

Expand international opportunities.

Work toward multi-year planning.

7

8

Ensure program quality.

Support postdoctoral scholars.

9

10

Revise the CGPS governance structure.

Build collaborative relationships.

11

12

Tell the college story.

Cultivate lasting relationships with alumni.

13

strategic plan is guided by the University of Saskatchewan's four principles of sustainability, diversity, connectivity, and creativity. The college continues to make progress within our three areas of aspiration: *Achieving Inclusive Academic Excellence, Creating Knowledge and Skills, and Rejuvenating Relationships.*

I am immensely proud and grateful for the commitments and contributions made by our staff, the many volunteers who serve on our Governance Standing Committees and Working Groups, and the ongoing engagement of Graduate Chairs, Administrators, and faculty as we move the dial to bring our college to the forefront of graduate education in Canada and on the world stage. It is my distinct please to share our progress toward our strategic goals.



The CGPS Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar annual report was developed to share statistics of the many aspects of graduate programming at USask. Annual report with demographics, patterns of student enrolment and key student outcomes are now available every spring.

✓ Goal 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Analytics and enhanced reporting: Dashboards now available to better understand our student body, allow units direct access to data to inform decisions in real time.

✓ Goal 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 11 |

Increased domestic efforts: Leveraged new meeting platforms to hold virtual and in-person recruitment events.

✓ Goal 2 |

Indigenous Graduate Student Initiatives Coordinator position (term) supports retention and recruitment of Indigenous students.

✓ Goal 2 |

Indigenization & Decolonization Highlights

Indigenous graduate students in 2022-23 made up 7% of the total graduate student population with the highest majority (45%) in the College of Education.

Aligned to ohpahotân / oohpaahotaan and made possible through the oýateki partnership which brings together three leading institutions to foster systematic change for Indigenous students, CGPS is responding to reconciliation and decolonization from a graduate student lens.

✚ Recruitment of an Indigenous Graduate Initiatives Coordinator to mobilize wrap around support for Indigenous graduate students.

✚ Increased Indigenous Graduate Leadership Award funding from \$150K to \$250K per year.

✚ Two \$10K entrance scholarships made possible by the William R. Dixon estate starting in 2023/24 for ten years.

✚ Working toward stronger communication channels with campus partners and with Indigenous students focusing on community, connection, and funding opportunities.

✚ The Four Seasons of Reconciliation course designed for graduate students through partnership with the University Library and the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning will continue as an annual offering.

✚ Engaging our staff in campus initiatives | thank you Angela Ryde, CGPS program advisor, for representing the college at the ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan Spring Symposium.

✚ Anti racism training completed by all CGPS staff, and our journey continues to learn, lead, and position the college as partners in decolonization.

Service Focus: Through fostering a mindset of continuous improvement in our staff, we will adopt best practices and continue to streamline processes to provide outstanding service while containing costs. Initiatives include:

- Developing a scholarship & awards communications strategy.
- Defined turnaround processing times that helps units better plan during admission cycles.
- Provide planning tools and opportunities to create community for graduate students that contribute to belonging through the GradHUB.

✔ Goal 3 | 4 | 11 |

A comprehensive EDI review and guiding statement development: Building on USask's diverse and inclusive graduate community, the CGPS' EDI project objective is to establish and implement a framework and strategy for equity, diversity and inclusion which will address the needs of both graduate students and graduate faculty. The work to update policies and process will continue into next year.

✔ Goal 3 | 4 |

	POLICY REVISIONS	21-2022	22-2023
	POLICY 3: Supervision	✔	
in progress	POLICY 4: Time in Program	✔	✔
approved	POLICY 8: Defense	✔	
notice of motion	POLICY 10: Graduate Student Funding	✔	✔
	POLICY 13: Leaves of Absence	✔	✔
	POLICY 18: Grad Committee Guidelines	✔	✔
	POLICY 19: College Committee TORs	✔	✔
	POLICY 19: College Bylaws	✔	✔
	NEW POLICY: EDI Statement	✔	✔
	POLICY 6: Examinations	✔	✔

Increased Student Supports for onboarding, career exploration and professional development: Over 80% of graduate students and faculty agreed that skills should be built into their respective programming and was the genesis of the Professional Skills project. To incent excellence within graduate programs development of modules are being developed ([ref: CAGS Task Force – Expanded PhD Professional Skills Statement 2021](#)) that allow course instructors to insert professionally developed content within their respective courses including the ubiquitous 990 course requirement. These modules feature resources for instructors and supporting active learning. Modules being piloted include:

- Professional communication
- Interpersonal relations
- Intercultural engagement
- Project management
- Leadership
- Ideation and entrepreneurial thinking

✔ Goal 5 | 8 | 11 |

CGPS committed to increased resources to grow the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program and facilitates several activities to promote interdisciplinarity across graduate programs. Annual events are developed for InterD students and are open to USask's graduate community.

✔ Goal 8 | 11 |

USask's InterD program is home to two Vanier scholars, Lindsey Boechler (2022) and Jocelyn Peltier-Huntley (2021), and USask's first ever Trudeau Scholar, Joel Bernbaum.

CELEBRATING interdisciplinarity.



On April 13, Dr. David Ogborn, Associate Professor of Media and Communication Studies at McMaster University, delivered a stirring, multimedia lecture on Computer Music as Inter/Anti/Non-Disciplinary Research. Dr. Ogborn's talk included a performance of music and visualizations generated in real time by live coding. He ended the presentation with his views on the challenge of defining interdisciplinary scholarship. The hour-long talk, which was delivered both in-person and virtually. This event was a celebration of interdisciplinary ideas at their finest!

Removing barriers for dual, cotutelle and visiting research students. CGPS adopted the common cotutelle tuition model while registration must be maintained at both institutions, students are only charged tuition from one institution at a time.

CGPS supports a variety of pathways for international students to pursue graduate students at USask. Visiting research student program provides both graduate and undergraduate students the opportunity for international students to participate in short-term studies at USask while continuing to work towards a degree at their home university. USask hosted more than 100 VRS students this year.

For the first time, 21/22 saw the largest admission of graduate students originating from Iran, surpassing China. CGPS has creatively worked through various unforeseen issues with Iranian students and postdocs this past year. As well as supported graduate and visiting research students and postdoc scholars from the Ukraine.

✓ Goal 2 | 6 | 7 |

#SUPPORTOURSCIENCE was founded on May 15, 2022. This grassroots movement advocates for improved funding to the Tri-Agencies (SSHRC, CIHR, and NSERC) by the federal government. USask's own doctoral candidate Andrea Wishart continues to be a pivotal contributor to the federal policy conversation.

On May 1, 2023, the one-year birthday of #supportourscience, there was a planned nationwide graduate student and postdoctoral scholar walkout – of which many U15 graduate deans and faculty marched alongside their students.



USask entered its second year of a three-year commitment in graduate tuition predictability. A multi-year tuition plan was developed that leverages stable government funding to 2024.

Changes to CGPS managed (central) funding streams have been rolling out since January 2023.

For the first time ever, academic units have received a three-year (rolling) commitment of central funding. As a part of the reimagine funding project imperatives include better transparency, more flexibility for units, and contribute to effective recruitment through timely offers.

✓ Goal 2 | 3 | 4 | 7 |

This academic year, four new graduate programs are scheduled to be included in the Program Catalogue for September 2023 implementation.

- Graduate Certificate in Foundations for Registered Nurse Specialty Practice
- Graduate Certificate in Substance Use Health and Wellbeing
- Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Precision Oral and Systematic Health
- Master of Science (M.Sc.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree programs in Statistics

Additionally, a total of 61 program changes across a variety of disciplines have been approved and 54 new courses passed University Course Challenge (UCC) without additional pathway approval requirements.

✓ Goal 5 | 7 | 8 |

Program review is a fundamentally important process that evaluates the status, effectiveness, and progress of academic programs and helps identify the future direction, needs, and priorities of those programs. In partnership with Institutional Planning and Assessment (IPA), Dean Burshtyn participated in reviews for Drama, Art & Art History, and Music.

✓ Goal 8 |

Postdoctoral scholar initiatives through website revisions, partner relationships and redefined communication channels contributed to postdoc experiences at USask.

- Continued free professionally facilitated project management workshops for Postdocs and PhD students.

- 3MP professional communication competition. Congratulations to [Dr. Rima Siauciunaite](#) whose 3MP talk was ranked first place in February.
- Career week in March – an opportunity for Postdocs and PhDs to engage with a variety of professional development opportunities.
- 1:1 career coaching with USask's Career Services and through independent study through CGPS' Beyond the Professoriate Aurora platform.
- Supporting research integrity through development of responsible conduct of research (RCR) training.

“ Rima Siauciunaite entered the USask Three Minute Postdoc Competition for a chance to brush up on her communication skills for a conference. She was surprised that it sparked a renewed motivation in her postdoctoral research project.”

The Misiwêskamik International Postdoctoral Fellowship has brought five internationally acclaimed scholars to USask since its inception in 2019. This fellowship was developed exclusively for USask postdoc scholars made possible by [USask's International Blueprint for Action](#). Congratulations to Thomas Jurrissen who was awarded a Misiwêskamik International Postdoctoral Fellowship for two years starting May 1. Dr. Jurrissen joins USask from the University of Missouri (Mizzou). During his PhD, Jurrissen focused on the role of adipon on vascular insulin resistance and endothelial function in the setting of type 2 diabetes.

✓ Goal 9 | 11 |

USask has allocated \$2M in one-time funding provided by the Government of Saskatchewan, as well as \$400,000 from the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), for the new Living Skies Postdoctoral Fellows Program. Through the pilot project, USask is now recruiting postdoctoral scholars through this program.

Dr. Lilia Yumagulova, and Dr. Anthony Shillito, were awarded highly competitive Banting Fellowships to carry out their research at USask. Their projects entail self-determination for Indigenous community disaster displacement, and to get to the root of why Earth's first

animals made the move from oceans to land 420 million years ago. Each recipient will receive \$140K over two years.

✓ Goal 12 |

CGPS Bylaws: Collegial governance is the foundation of a cohesive and engaged university community. Confidence in the CGPS's governance structure and processes is essential for the college to meet institutional objectives. Revisions to the CGPS governance structure began in 2022 with revised committee terms of reference. In March of 2023, CGPS is pleased to report that the first set of college bylaws, since the college's creation in 1946, were approved by University Council with the important shift from a committee of our entire graduate faculty (approx. 1800 members) to a representative Faculty Council.

✓ Goal 10 | 11 | 12 |

Increased Resources for Training Staff: Developed training tools and opportunities to connect with others who support graduate programming and students. Including:

- Graduate administrator handbook (led by Angela Ryde).
- Graduate chairs handbook.
- Indigenous student viewbook.
- Supervisor handbook.
- Graduate funding templates and tutorials.
- Tri-Agency application tutorials and resources created for students.
- Graduate chair orientation.
- Anti-racism training for CGPS staff.

✓ Goal 3 | 4 | 11 |

Formalized Communications Strategy: Through intentionality, the college's Be Bold, Be Ambitious campaign continues to be leveraged allowing us to position the college as a facilitator and key contributor to student success.

Significant effort to get to know and celebrate our stakeholders continues in a variety of ways:

- Annual 1:1 leadership meeting with college/school leaders.
- Several working and advisory groups were struck to help support the work of policy changes, EDI statement development, funding changes, governance revisions, and others.

- Specialized community building GradHUB events and preterm welcomes (formally referred to as orientation) delivered and designed specifically for graduate students.
- Postdoc meet and greets and 1:1 orientation sessions.
- Formalized Associate Dean's Grad monthly business meetings.
- Enhanced in person and online student tuition consultation meetings.

☑ Goal 11 |

- Development of specialized web site features, an annual recognition magazine and regular graduate community special features.
- Fall and Spring Toast to Doctoral Students event featuring special recognition for PhD graduates.
- Development of the Kelly Clement Memorial Service Award - awarded for the first time in January of 2023 to Linda Nemeth of Veterinary Microbiology and Susan Mason, CGPS (retired).

☑ Goal 12 |

“ We are a small department, and it takes a whole village to raise a grad student. At the heart of our village, is Linda.”

In the spring of 2022, the National Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS) benchmarked student satisfaction across Canada. In most areas, USask graduate students reported similar experiences and perceptions to the national average. Take aways from the survey indicated that improvement is needed in:

- Supports around career options.
- Applying professional skills.
- Supports and collaborations with faculty toward grant proposals.
- Improvements in faculty supporting their graduate students toward current job market and career prospects.

☑ Goal 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 |

3 Minute Thesis Competition (3MT)

80,000 That's how many words are in a typical PhD thesis. Years of grueling research, sleepless nights, and history-making breakthroughs. Presenting something of this scale would take approximately nine hours. 3MT competitors do it in 3 minutes.

CGPS hosted the 3MT finals on April 11th. The finals were live streamed on location from the GSA Commons with over 500 viewers tuning in across the world. With more than 2000 votes counted, Michele Monroy-Valle, PhD student in Community Health & Epidemiology, was named the People's Choice winner.

Congratulations to Narsimha Pujari, PhD student in Veterinary Biomedical Sciences on his first place talk *Flirty Flies to Funky Physiology: The Impact of Sex on Female Metabolism*. Narsimha will represent USask at the May 25th Western Regional 3MT competition.

Today's challenges and opportunities allows us to think broadly about our people, processes, policies, and our programs and how we can ensure that students thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape.

Our university has set its goal to be the university the world needs, and the contributions of our graduate students are instrumental in reaching that goal. CGPS is committed to uplifting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.