



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

College of Medicine

Faculty Council

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To: Members of the General Academic Assembly

From: Dr. Tom Wilson, Chair College of Medicine Faculty Executive

Re: **Special Meeting of the General Academic Assembly (GAA)**
Thursday September 6th, 2012
11:30 a.m. (Registration) GAA Meeting 12:00 -13:00 p.m. Convocation Hall

Dear Colleague:

On behalf of the College of Medicine Faculty Council, I urge you and your colleagues to attend the important special meeting of the General Academic Assembly at noon on September 6th. This meeting is being held to address concerns about planned structural changes to the College of Medicine, but has ramifications for all other Colleges and Units at the University of Saskatchewan.

Without a notice of motion, the University Council voted on May 17th, to accept the "College of Medicine Concept Paper" authored by members of the administration, which would restructure the College of Medicine and delete almost half the clinical faculty. The University Council approved the motion in spite of learning that 85% of the Faculty of the College of Medicine rejected the "Concept Paper" at their Faculty Council meeting, and in spite of many members and faculty guests speaking out against the motion. We believe that the faculty of the College of Medicine is in the best position to deliberate and decide on changes that affect our students and our accreditation. We have great concerns over the lack of faculty input to the "Concept Paper" and the pressure for rapid approval through the University Council. A similar process could be used to restructure any College at the University at the University, in essence without faculty input.

Using the University Council to approve the "Concept Paper," without the assent of the College of Medicine Faculty Council represents an assault on Academic Freedom. Without meaningful consultation or approval of the academic faculty of the College of Medicine half of the clinical faculty from the College of Medicine have been effectively eliminated. These clinical faculty will lose their University rank and protections under academic freedom, and stand to be hired back as independent contractors. In addition the "Concept Paper's" emphasis on research, (as measured by Tri-council funding), was justified as an accreditation issue. On the contrary research was not a major area of concern in the accreditation report, and a shifting focus onto research is likely to decrease the College's efforts in teaching and patient service. Rather than address future accreditation issues, as it was claimed, the new structure has the potential to undermine those areas most deserving of attention.

Our Faculty Council executive recently delivered a petition of over 60 university faculty signatures to President Busch-Vishniac, requiring her to convene a Special Meeting of the General Academic Assembly. Our goals at this historic meeting will be to achieve quorum (150 GAA members) and then pass a motion by a 2/3 majority asking University Council to reconsider the motion of May 17th.

We need your support. Please join us on September 6th in solidarity to support the right of faculty to determine their academic programs and structure, and encourage your colleagues to attend the meeting as well. Thanks in advance.

Thanks in advance,

Thomas W. Wilson, MD, MSc, FRCPC, FACP
Chair, College of Medicine, Faculty Council