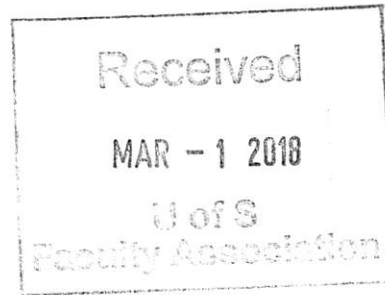


February, 26, 2018

USFA CWI  
Room 20 Education  
28 Campus Drive  
Saskatoon SK S7N 0X1



Dear members of the USFA CWI,

First of all, I commend the work that the USFA CWI has done to support Indigenous female faculty on campus, and I appreciate the background information that you provide in your letter.

It is very unfortunate that Indigenous female faculty have experienced a tenure and promotion evaluation process that was deemed discriminatory. This is an issue that needs to be addressed, and we are in the process of doing so.

The University of Saskatchewan is committed to strengthening Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation efforts through systematic, systemic and sustainable means. This is evident in our foundational documents. Our vision statement declares, "We will be an outstanding institution of research, learning, knowledge-keeping, reconciliation, and inclusion with and by Indigenous peoples and communities". Our Principles include: different ways of knowing, learning, and being; diversity; equality and human dignity; a healthy working and learning environment; and, reconciliation. Finally, our Values highlight: collegiality; fairness and equitable treatment; inclusiveness; integrity, honesty, and ethical behaviour.

The emerging University Plan has provided another opportunity for the University to commit to our Vision statement's direction. The Plan states that "Together, we are uplifting Indigenization to a place of prominence at the University of Saskatchewan" and "Indigenization challenges us to amplify the forces of decolonization. Decolonization practices contest divisive and demeaning actions, policies, programming, and frameworks". As the USFA CWI has done, the University Plan encourages "opportunities to bring people together to share their experiences of truth, [so that] we contribute to individual and collective healing and nourish deeper expressions of reconciliation".

Some of the Plan's guideposts that will inform these commitments include:

- Recognized Indigenous leadership at all levels of the academy, administration, and governance
- Systems and structures—including tenure, promotion, and merit practices—that support and recognize Indigenization

- A university community—Indigenous and non-Indigenous—increasingly empowered by active and ongoing system-wide learning that supports the growth and sustainability of Indigenization
- Growth in the number, diversity, and strength of reconciliation programming across colleges and schools
- Recognized leadership in reconciliation models, initiatives, and methodologies
- Systems and structures that support reconciliation
- Local, provincial, national, and international recognition for the strong stance on reconciliation and for meaningful reconciliation initiatives
- Strong evidence of initiatives that are responsive to the TRC Calls to Action

These guideposts will be translated into metrics that will ensure that the University, as a whole, is meeting and sustaining Indigenization and Reconciliation efforts – all of which will support Indigenous students, faculty and staff by recognizing Indigenous forms of teaching, research and scholarly orientations, and the additional obligations that they have to the University, other organizations, and their home communities.

Our new Vice-Provost of Indigenous Engagement, Jacqueline Ottmann, has been working with Indigenous Elders, language teachers, faculty, staff and students to inform the University Plan, and with various committees (e.g. Dean's Council, Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning, Provost's Executive Committee, Planning and Priorities Committee) to promote and facilitate this process of systematic change.

The tenure, merit and promotion policies and guidelines and their impact on Indigenous faculty were reviewed at the last Dean's Council. As a result, the Vice-Provost of Faculty Relations, Jim Germida, agreed to organize a committee that will explore changes in this area. It is recognized that this issue is not unique to the University of Saskatchewan, and we hope to lead these changes within the U15 and Universities Canada.

This is done knowing that we all benefit when the University is responsive to the needs of its community members.

I thank you for drawing my attention to the issues you raise in your letter.

Sincerely,



Peter Stoicheff,  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
University of Saskatchewan