



**Minutes of the OPEN Session of the  
Board of Governors  
Held by Web Conference on August 11, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.**

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Present: J. Lieberman, Chair  
J. Leclerc, Secretary

J. Anderson M. Benarroch J. Dela Cruz L. Hyde K. Lee J. Linden  
C. Loewen A. Mahon T. Matthews N. Murdock K. Osiowy S. Prentice  
L. Reimer S. Sekander K. Smith J. Taylor

Regrets: K. Clarke M. McNicholl Absent: D. Hunter

Assessors Present: J. Morrill S. Woloschuk

Officials Present: C. Cook S. Foster D. Jayas J. Kearsey  
A. Konowalchuk J. Ristock L. Zapshala-Kelln

Guests: N. Andrew T. Mondor

**1. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**FOR ACTION**

**1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Ms. Loewen and seconded by Dr. Reimer:

**THAT the agenda for the August 11, 2020 meeting be approved as circulated.**

**CARRIED**

**2. MINUTES (Open) Session**

2.1 Approval of the Minutes of the June 23, 2020 Open Session as circulated or amended

It was moved by Dr. Reimer and seconded by Ms. Loewen:

**THAT the minutes of the June 23, 2020 Open session be approved as circulated.**

**CARRIED**

2.2 Business Arising

There was no business arising from the minutes.

## **FOR INFORMATION**

### 3. Report from the President

Dr. Benarroch provided his report verbally. He noted that he met with members of government in recent weeks; including the Minister of Economic Development and Training, the Honourable Ralph Eichler, and the Deputy Minister, as well His Worship Mayor Brian Bowman, and Mr. Terry Duguid, Member of Parliament. He expressed his hope that he would meet with other senior provincial and federal officials very soon. He said it was clear in these meetings that government values the University and recognizes the uncertainty it faces due the COVID 19 pandemic.

Dr. Benarroch said the beginning of his term was unusual because of the constraints that were part of the pandemic response at the University and across the country. He said he is currently working remotely from Toronto and, although it has been difficult at times, he has been able to accomplish what he had set out to do in his first six weeks as President of the University.

President Benarroch stated he had engaged Dr. Bonnie Patterson to work with the senior team and facilitate an Executive Retreat. He said that Dr. Patterson has more than four decades of senior executive leadership in the higher education sector.

Dr. Benarroch said a presentation given at a recent Senate meeting, on the current COVID 19 situation at the University, will be provided to the Board of Governors today. Lastly, Dr. Benarroch said he was wholly committed to having an excellent fall term and ensuring a great experience for students.

### 4. Update on the COVID-19 Response

Dr. Benarroch introduced this item, stating that Dr. Mondor would make a presentation to the Board about the University's response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Dr. Mondor began his presentation, noting that the University's Emergency Response Plan (ERP) was activated on March 23, 2020. He said the ERP is a tool used to guide actions, decision-making processes, communications, and coordination of the University's response to an emergency. The ERP includes a Crisis Management Team comprised of members of the President's Executive Team, the Chief Risk Officer (as Chair), the Director of Security Services, and selected individuals with relevant expertise. He detailed three committees that were established to assist in planning and steering the response:

- i. COVID-19 Recovery Working Group (reporting to the Vice-President (Administration))
  - Review academic, research and other recovery plans for a safe, slow, and phased-in return to on-campus activity.

- ii. COVID-19 Response Planning Committee (reporting to the Recovery Working Group)
  - Develop plans, strategies, and tactics necessary to maintain high-quality academic programming and consider academic unit recovery plans.
- iii. Academic Planning Working Group (reporting to the Provost)
  - UM's coordinated response to positive COVID cases on campus, including consideration of privacy matters and liaison with public health authorities.

Dr. Mondor reviewed the guiding principles for the University's pandemic recovery, which are:

- The health and safety of students, staff, faculty, and visitors is the overarching priority.
- All students, staff, and faculty will work remotely unless approval has been granted to work on campus.
- Any activity on campus, whatever its nature, will be carried out while strictly respecting the constraints of public health authorities in accordance with government guidelines and directives.
- Recovery of on-campus activities will be gradual and in keeping with the University's stated principles and recovery plan.
- The University will continue to take into consideration special circumstances for staff, faculty, and students, including individual health conditions.

With respect to prevention measures in place as the University moves through the phases of recovery, Dr. Mondor listed the following guidelines:

- Stay informed and follow public health directives;
- Limited access to campus facilities and spaces;
- Health screening will play a role in assessing access to facilities;
- Continue to practice good hygiene;
- Maintain a physical distance of not less than two meters and do not exceed one person per ten square meters;
- Do not go to campus if you display any symptoms;
- Wear a mask or other appropriate face covering if you are unable to maintain the minimum two-meter distance. Wearing a mask is strongly encouraged when working in the proximity of others;
- Ensure frequent disinfecting, especially of high-touch surfaces and objects.

Dr. Mondor stated that the phases of pandemic recovery at the University are expected to correspond to the academic year, as follows:

- Initial Response/Phase One: March 2020
- Phase Two Recovery: Summer Term 2020
- Phase Three Recovery: Fall Term 2020
- Phase Four Recovery: Winter Term 2021

Dr. Mondor noted that Phase Two of the recovery meant working remotely for most employees while facing increased demand to support the transition to remote working; to carry out enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures; to manage global supply-chain shortages; and to develop space plans for a return to on-campus activity. He added that some on-campus activity was deemed essential and almost 400 employees remained on campus to support University operations. He said that communications staff managed increasingly complicated and critical communications which were necessary to share information with the internal and external community.

Dr. Mondor stated that there were a number of Ancillary Services closures in Phase One, including the Bookstore, the Retail businesses in UMSU University Centre, Parking and Transportation Services, Retail Dining Services, and Conference and Catering Services. He added that other ancillary units were scaled back to support essential activities, including Student Residences, Residence Dining Services, and the University Centre Pharmacy (which must remain open as per legislation).

Dr. Mondor explained that in Phase Two, the following Ancillary areas reopened with some modifications:

- The Fort Garry Bookstore fulfilled online & phone orders and arranged procurement for fall term courses with a partial opening on August 4 with restrictions and reduced hours.
- The Bannatyne Bookstore offered a pick-up option for summer term.
- Student Residences offered a summer meal plan for 325 students who remained in private rooms.
- The Focal Point Optician was open by appointment only.
- The Active Living Centre opened July 27, 2020 at a reduced capacity.
- The University field house, turf fields, and soccer fields were open on a reduced scale to allow Bison athletes to train.
- The Bruce D. Campbell Food and Farm Discovery Center at Glenlea was open by appointment.

Dr. Jayas spoke to the pandemic response in the research portfolio. He noted that although the University's buildings were locked on March 23, many researchers required access to buildings in order to look after animals, other living organisms, and critical cell lines; to continue multi-year critical studies; to maintain equipment; and to prevent the loss of years of research progress and/or funding. He reviewed the process by which researchers submitted requests to continue their research, noting that 196 requests of 218 submitted were approved between March 24 and May 24, 2020.

Dr. Jayas said the same guiding principles were followed in the initial response phase in the research area. He added that some research continued and critical COVID-19 research began. In phase two, he said, there was further opening in research with 50 percent occupancy in some labs, facilities, and field research stations. He added that this phase did not include research that could be conducted remotely. In Phase two, he said, numerous forms were submitted for

access to facilities, with almost 1200 researchers who requested access, and the majority of these requests were accommodated.

In phase three of recovery, Dr. Jayas said, researchers who were approved in phase two were permitted to continue their research without reapplying. He noted that more research was permitted in phase three, with many researchers requiring access to libraries and requests to begin or resume research involving human participants.

Dr. Mondor summarized the phased recovery in academic programs, noting a number of steps taken in response to the pandemic in phase one, including:

- Moving to providing remote learning instead of in-person classes as of March 23, 2020.
- Suspending sections of the *Responsibilities of Academic Staff with Regards to Students Policy (ROASS)* to allow this switch in delivery methods.
- Extending the time during which students could voluntarily withdraw from courses,
- No in-person final exams or SEEQ's (teaching evaluations) were conducted.
- Approving Duolingo English Language Proficiency tests for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021
- Suspending the requirement for medical notes and suspending the *repeated course policy*.
- Offering flexibility in course grading for students, with the option to accept the standard approach (letter grade), accepting a letter grade that is excluded from University of Manitoba Grade Point Average (GPA) calculations, or accepting a pass/fail in the course.

Regarding spring convocation 2020, Dr. Mondor stated that convocation was held virtually at the end of June, and was very successful. He noted that 4,255 students graduated and the ceremonies were viewed online around the world. He said that the thirty-first annual Traditional Graduation Pow Wow was a live-streamed celebration for 60 Indigenous graduates that featured Indigenous musical performances and messages from Indigenous community and alumni. He added that this event was viewed live by 250 viewers and on video by watched 6,600 viewers.

Dr. Mondor spoke to the work of the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning in supporting instructors and students in remote learning and for on-line exams. He noted that a toll-free number was established for video-conferencing for students with limited internet connectivity.

In phase two (summer term 2020), Dr. Mondor noted that University buildings remained locked and the term start was delayed until June 1. He added that the term was declared as being solely by remote learning; however, there were some limited in-person activities on campus, including:

- Teaching support for summer course and preparation for Fall term;
- Essential research activities; and
- Essential services and/or activities that could not be completed by remote means, such as providing library materials by curbside pickup for faculty and graduate students.

Dr. Mondor stated that summer 2020 undergraduate student participation was greater than in summer 2019, and there was also slightly more graduate student participation this summer. He added that conversion and acceptance rates were similar to previous years, which indicates higher student engagement.

Moving to phase three (fall term 2020); Dr. Mondor said that all possible courses were offered through remote learning. He added that some courses and some activities within courses that could not be offered remotely were approved for in-person instruction because they were required courses for program or degree requirements. He said they were offered in order to avoid a significant delay in progression for students. He noted that 205 courses were approved for in-person instruction out of the 1775 courses offered.

Dr. Mondor said that Laurie Schnarr, Vice-Provost (Student Affairs), and Mark Torchia (Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning) were key in ensuring students were supported throughout the term. He noted that all student support programs, services, and supports were delivered remotely. He added that a COVID 19 Emergency Relief fund was established that disbursed approximately \$2.1 million to students, and technology support was provided by refurbishing University computers for students, and providing funds to students to purchase technology. Additionally, Dr. Mondor said that the University established UM Commons, a virtual gateway for students to access resources, supports, and connections, such as a web hub, modules to support transition to university, Math Boot Camp, Prep Week, and Welcome Day.

With respect to support for Faculty, Dr. Mondor said a number of changes were made to assist faculty members in their work, including:

- Digitization work in Libraries, HathiTrust & curbside pick-up for faculty and students;
- Extending the tenure period;
- Offering paid training on remote teaching for sessional instructors;
- Providing enhanced support through the Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning (CATL) for remote teaching, including a robust suite of in-person and online supports for instructors; and
- Ensuring flexibility regarding changes to research study leaves.

Dr. Mondor stated that the University is implementing an articulated approach to recovery. He explained that remote work will continue where possible and practical and priority will be given to activity that supports on-campus instruction and research plans. He added that on-campus activity must adhere to the public health guidelines outlined on the University of Manitoba COVID Recovery website, and should be limited using a phased or staggered approach. He noted that all physical distancing, and health and safety standards must be met and self-assessment tools must be used.

Dr. Mondor noted the following practices that will be implemented in phase three:

- As of September 1, the maximum percentage of employees within a Faculty or unit that may be permitted to attend on- campus at a given time is restricted to 40%.

- This percentage is to include all research, teaching, support and administrative activities within a Faculty/Unit.
- Deans and Unit heads will have the responsibility for determining access.
- Building occupancy will be tracked and monitored.
- In the event of a resurgence in the pandemic or an increase in risk to the UM community, activity may need to be reduced and restrictions strengthened.

The Chair thanked Dr. Mondor and Dr. Jayas for the presentation and invited comments and questions from Board members.

Comments were made about the need to provide support for faculty members, beyond the excellent support already provided by CATL and IST. In particular, it was noted that many faculty members are struggling with increased workloads and childcare issues, and some have been disproportionately affected. Dr. Benarroch agreed that these concerns should be recognized. He said Management appreciates the significant effort that all are making to get to this point.

A question arose about plans for the winter term. Dr. Ristock said that decisions about the winter term must be made soon, as it is unlikely that large in-person classes will not be permitted. She noted that some components of classes will be held on campus. She added that this is something she has been discussing with colleagues at other universities.

A suggestion was made about the importance of ensuring the committees have sufficient breadth by including Indigenous people and students in the membership. Dr. Benarroch agreed that is an important first step to take. Dr. Ristock agreed, noting that a wider representation will offer a better understanding of the situation.

In responding to a question, Dr. Benarroch said that the committees mentioned in the presentation will make recommendations to Administration when decisions need to be made regarding the return to on-person activity on the campuses. He added that there will be a number of things to consider in making those decisions, including space requirements for ensuring social distancing, which classes could be held in person, and cleaning and sanitizing requirements. He said that evaluating the fall term and monitoring the changing pandemic situation will help to determine how the University proceeds in the winter term.

Regarding international students, Dr. Benarroch said that it is not yet known how many will return to Winnipeg. He added that the University wants to find a way to help these students transition when they return. He explained that the University is working to make arrangements for the returning international students to quarantine, which may include making hotel arrangements, and having someone at the airport to meet them and ensure they get where they need to go without unnecessary movement around the city.

The Chair stated that the Board has been amazed at the efforts made to allow continuation of classes and offer exams online. He thanked everyone for their work.

**MOTION TO MOVE TO CLOSED AND CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**

It was moved by Dr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Osiowy:

**THAT the meeting move into Closed and Confidential Session**

**CARRIED**

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Chair

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University Secretary