

**MEMO**

**FROM:** Dr. James Mandigo, Provost and VP Academic  
**DATE:** September 15, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Senate Provost's Report – September 2020

---

As we start a new academic year like none other in the history of UFV (and for most post-secondary institutions around the world for that matter), I wanted to take this opportunity to welcome both new and returning senators. Senate plays a vital role in the collegial governance of the university. As the academic stewards for the University, senators play a vital role in identifying our short-term and long-term academic response and recovery to the global pandemic. Perhaps never before has the role of senators to help guide the academic mission of the University been more important. And while we are all awaiting the day in which the pandemic has been officially lifted, the academic landscape that awaits us will be quite different. There are very few who believe that we will ever return back to where we were prior to the pandemic. That is why it is critical that senators play an active role in helping not only guide our academic programming during the pandemic, but also to look ahead to how we respond to the rapidly changing world of post-secondary education and the needs of our society.

**COVID-19 Updates**

The summer has been a very busy time as we continue to respond to various health directives provided by both the Federal and Provincial Governments.

At the Provincial level, the [Go Forward Guidelines for the Post Secondary Sector](#) were released in July. These Go Forward Guidelines are hosted on the WorkSafe BC COVID-19 Page along with other sectors' Go Forward Guidelines. Every post-secondary institution in the Province has been required to develop their own COVID-19 Safety Plan that are consistent with the Go Forward Guidelines and to post these guidelines on our webpage. UFV has dedicated the following webpage to providing the most up-to-date information to help keep you informed and safe. You can access this website at <https://www.ufv.ca/coronavirus/>.

I would like to draw Senators' attention to some specific sites.

- UFV's COVID-19 Institutional Safety Plan: <https://www.ufv.ca/media/assets/risk-and-safety/covid-19-safety-response/UFV-COVID-19-Institutional-Safety-Plan.pdf>. This plan is in direct response to the Go Forward Guidelines for Post-Secondary Institutions.
- UFV's Safe Return to Campus Plan: <https://www.ufv.ca/media/assets/risk-and-safety/covid-19-safety-response/Safe-Return-to-Campus-Plan.pdf>. This is a requirement of WorkSafe BC.
- UFV's Exposure Control Plan: <https://www.ufv.ca/media/assets/risk-and-safety/covid-19-safety-response/COVID-19-Exposure-Control-Plan.pdf>. UFV's plan to mitigate the risk of exposure to the coronavirus.

- UFV's International COVID-19 Support Plan for International Students:  
<https://www.ufv.ca/media/assets/international-education/International-Support-COVID-19-Plan.pdf>.  
This is a requirement from the Federal Government.

In my last report to Senate, I wrote that the World Health Organization had reported 5.6 million global cases of COVID-19 and 350,000 deaths and that BC had flattened the curve. Fast forward 4 months and those global numbers have reached 30 million confirmed cases and closing in on a grim milestone of 1 million deaths. BC's confirmed cases have increased from the tens per day to the hundreds per day in what appears to be the start of the anticipated "second wave". While many of us hoped that these numbers could be avoided and that we could start to anticipate a return to "normal", the current situation suggests that we need to continue to be diligent in our actions to mitigate exposure to the SARS-Cov-2 virus as best we can.

At the September Senate meeting, Senators will consider a motion to continue with the same delivery format of academic programming for the Winter, 2021 semester. For BC to move into Phase 4 in response to the pandemic, a widely available vaccine needs to be available and administered to the majority of the population. While significant progress has been made around the development of a vaccine and our understanding of the coronavirus, we are still many months away from knowing the results of various Stage 3 clinical vaccine trials currently underway. As a result, we are not in a position to alter our current response to academic programming and increase our face-to-face delivery of courses for the Winter, 2021 term. Rather the motion for senators to consider is to continue to deliver the majority of our courses and methods of assessment in an online/ remote form of delivery and only consider face-to-face instruction when it is deemed absolutely essential to achieving the learning outcomes and online instruction is not feasible. The motion prioritizes the health and safety of not only our UFV community, but the broader community in which we interact on a daily basis. I feel we have been able to mitigate the risk of exposure as much as we can while also maintaining the integrity of our academic programming since the start of the pandemic. Everyone has worked very hard to find a balance between these two priorities and I suggest that the current path we have found for the delivery of our academic programming has been the most viable path possible given the difficult circumstances we are all facing.

This is not to suggest that the path has been easy or tireless. Quite the opposite. Faculty have worked long hours to transition many of their courses or teach smaller groups of students to help them complete their course requirements. Staff have had to juggle the many responsibilities and duties of their jobs while working from home or on campus while attending to their increased personal responsibilities. Students, many of whom chose UFV because of its reputation for personable face-to-face instruction, have had to transition to achieving their learning outcomes in a mainly digital format. Everyone has made sacrifices to try and make "lemonade out of lemons". It is also important to recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted individuals in a number of different ways and it is critical that we continue to show kindness and compassion to one another and those who are facing significant personal challenges and barriers. We will need to stay the course that has been given to us for a while longer and urge everyone to remember that we are all in this together and to continue to look for ways to support one another through this pandemic.

## Integrated Strategic Plan

Over the summer months, UFV moved into its next round of consultations in the development of a new Integrated Strategic Plan. Members of the University community were provided with an opportunity from August 6<sup>th</sup> to September 25<sup>th</sup> to respond to a set of draft strategic imperatives generated by various stakeholders across the University. At the conclusion of this round of consultations, a series of additional consultations with various groups across the University will take place to finalize the draft strategic imperatives that align with our three institutional goals. It is anticipated that a draft of the integrated strategic plan in its entirety will be ready for comment and review later this semester. Senate will play a critical role in its review and ultimate approval. You can view updates and the latest developments on the Integrated Strategic Plan at: <https://www.ufv.ca/strategic-planning/>

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Over the summer months, the continued violence of authorities towards black Americans has angered and frustrated many of us. While the world has focused on the horrific images and videos originating from the United States, systemic racism towards members of the BIPOC community in Canada, and yes at UFV, continues to occur. Some of it is overt and intentional; some of it is a result of ignorance and privilege. However, it is no less hurtful and painful for the victims who experience racism and discrimination on an almost daily basis. Many of are asking what can we do to end the systemic racism and discrimination?

In a guest [blog](#) by Dr. Satwinder Bains, Director of the [South Asian Studies Institute](#), she challenged us that “You start with YOU!” Her blog had a very profound impact upon me personally and I took up her challenge to learn more about how I can be part of the solution. Two very impactful books that I read over the summer that were recommended by the [Race Antiracism Network](#) were: *So you want to talk about race* (Ijeoma Oluo) and *White fragility* (Robin Diangelo). I’m currently working my way through *How to be an antiracist* (Ibram X. Kendi). I had always thought that I was an enlightened white person who was “in tune” with what racism was, what it looked like, what it sounded like and how it impacted people. However, over the past few months as I’ve listened, really tried to listen, to those whose are the victims of systemic racism every day, I’ve realized that I have much more to learn and understand. Even though I’ve spent the better part of my academic career as a self-proclaimed humanistic on a quest to examine ways in which we can create environments (primarily for young people) that foster the development of key life skills such as conflict resolution, critical thinking, problem solving, respect, and tolerance, these past few months have taught me that the issues that prevent equity, diversity, and inclusion run deep and that I, both as a global citizen and as a Provost and Vice-President Academic need to do better.

Mahatma Gandhi is famous for his quote “Be the change you want to see in the world”. I was reminded of this when Dr. Bains reminded us that “You start with YOU”. While the issues can seem overwhelming and so systemic that it can cause us to ask ourselves “what difference can I make”, I would challenge you to ask yourself “what CAN I do?” and start there. We are all at different points on our journey and so there is not one answer that is the right one for each person other than to commit to being better tomorrow than you are today.

Universities are uniquely positioned to be agents of change. We are experts in education. We are experts in research and scholarly activity. We have an opportunity to ask tough and difficult questions, pursue them through rigorous scientific methods, and then share those results not only with our students in our classes, but also with society at large. Real change can happen through awareness and acted upon through evidence-based decision making.

Over the next year, we will be looking at ways in which we can embed the [guiding principles](#) of the [President's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force](#) into UFV's new [Integrated Strategic Plan](#) and the Senior Academic Leadership Team. For example: a) the EDI Guiding Principles will be a standing item at all SALT meetings this year; b) I will be looking to develop membership on search committees for Senior Academic Positions that are representative of equity, diversity and inclusion; c) I will be bringing forward a recommendation to the Senate Academic Planning and Priorities Committee to examine UFV's Learning Outcomes to ensure they are reflective of UFV's EDI principles; d) and commit to implementing the action plan currently in development by the EDI Task Force.

The Provost Office will also be organizing monthly Virtual Brown Bag Lunches to address important topics. The first one will be hosted on September 30<sup>th</sup> by former Provost, Dr. Eric Davis, entitled: The Urgency of Anti-Racism. Participants can join via Zoom and are asked to email [provost@ufv.ca](mailto:provost@ufv.ca) for the link and passcode to attend.

Despite these actions and initiatives, making real and sustainable change is not simply checking off a "to do" list. It will require an ongoing commitment by all of us to listen, learn, and act.

The following are a number of highlights identified by leaders across our Academic Units of the important work that continued to take place during the summer months.

### **Our Faculty & Staff**

- The Continuing Education (CE) department secured Senate Approval for "Certificate in Civic Governance and Innovation" (to be developed in partnership with City of Abbotsford)
- ELS is launching its [Online Help Centre](#) in September 2020. This new service will provide free, 45-minute, one-to-one ELS support sessions between UFV students and ELS faculty via Blackboard Collaborate throughout the Fall 2020 semester.
- The 2020-21 academic year marks the 30th anniversary of ELS at UFV. The celebrations begin with a slideshow of past and present students, staff, and faculty on the department's [website](#).
- Dr. Judy Larsen of UFV's Upgrading and University Preparation ([UUP](#)) department has been recognized for her creative approach to teaching mathematics with an award from the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education ([STLHE Awards](#)), in partnership with [D2L](#) (formerly Desire2Learn).
- New faculty orientation was hosted in a virtual manner due to COVID 19. Over 40 participants attended from 6 different countries. A box of UFV gifts were provided to each new employee. Welcome presentations from President MacLean and Provost Mandigo were warmly received. Shirley Hardman made a powerful presentation on Indigenization to close the session.
- SOCA will be offering an [IDS 300: Race, Place and Space: Tools for Navigating Turbulent Times](#) course this fall 2020. The course will be led by SOCA Assistant Professor Dr. Anna Griffith and English Associate

Professor Dr. Michelle La Flamme. This class will help students understand issues of decolonization, whiteness, racialization, privilege and power, with the aim of promoting anti-racism.

- The FoS officially launched its first issue of the Faculty of Science magazine. Our annual magazine highlights the amazing science that takes place here at UFV and the people who are doing it. [https://issuu.com/goufv/docs/fos\\_2019-2020/1?ff](https://issuu.com/goufv/docs/fos_2019-2020/1?ff)
- Dr. Lucy Lee received the 2020 Fellow Award at the 2020 World Congress on In Vitro Biology which was held virtually in San Diego, California in June. This award recognizes Society for In Vitro Biology members who have outstanding contributions in their area of specialization. Dr. Lee also had 3 of her students present posters virtually at this conference (see list of presentations/publications below).
- UFV's Climate Change music video which was directed by Dr. Carin Bondar (Science Communicator and Adjunct Professor of Biology), and showcased many of UFV's talented faculty and students has been accepted into the Chilliwack Film Festival and is now shortlisted for the Imagine Science Film Festival in New York <http://imaginesciencefilms.org/>. The Facebook version of the video already has 135,000 views. Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dr1tgIWEJeA>
- Biology Sessional Instructor and Biology Adjunct Professor, Dr. Carin Bondar is a featured expert on two new shows, one on the Science Channel in the US called 'Strange Evidence' which just premiered and one for Discovery UK called 'I Got Lucky' which is still in post-production. She is also booked for a documentary shoot for The Nature of Things which will begin shooting in November. She took part in the Chilliwack Mural Festival in August and created an 8' x 3' inverted rainbow glass mural to represent alternative viewpoints and inclusivity. You can view her work in progress here <https://bit.ly/3l3YStT>.
- 12 Indigenous faculty and staff are taking part in a 10 basket Indigenous Tools for Living workshop, which includes 'train the trainer' sessions, with the goal of offering future workshops in-house.
- The Program Review office conducted external site visits for two program reviews using video conferencing: Modern Languages (College of Arts) on May 11-13, and English Language Studies (Faculty of Access and Continuing Education) on May 26-29. Both site visits proceeded well, with some valuable insights gained into best practices for running these sessions remotely.
- Course Resources Service for faculty: Working from a course reading list and/or syllabus, the Library can provide you with copyright-compliant, stable, persistent links to digital resources available from the library's licensed databases and journals, or from the open web. We'll advise you on the use of print materials and media content, too, and will digitize those if appropriate.
- Select & Collect: Library Pickup Service: in August, the Library launched *Select and Collect*, a curbside-like pickup service to our primary users (students and employees) and to UFV alumni. The service will be provided 4 days per week (Monday through Thursday, 12 noon to 4 pm, excluding holidays). Please note that as of the end of August, the service is only be available at the Abbotsford Library. Once renovations are finished at the CEP library, the service will be offered there as well.
- Library Instruction: We have developed research guides, tutorials and quizzes over the summer semester to deliver instruction on library research and information competency. Faculty are encouraged to request instructional support either through the web form, or by contacting their liaison librarian.
- As of September 1, 2020, the Department of Kinesiology will officially transition to being the new School of Kinesiology. Dr. Jason Brandenburg has been selected as the Director for this new school. Jason was previously the Department Head of Kinesiology.

- Two kinesiology professors, Dr. Iris Lesser and Carl Neinhuis, have researched the connection between activity and anxiety levels during the pandemic. Their results from June show that those who were more active had lower levels of anxiety, and those who were less active reported less enjoyment of life.
- On July 15, Dr. Iris Lesser invited people living with cancer and their supporters to an online webinar and Q&A session about the benefits of exercise. Read the story at:  
<https://www.abbynews.com/community/exercise-and-cancer-to-be-explored-via-webinar/>
- TLC's annual *New Faculty Kick Start* was a great success with a record 33 permanent, LTA and sessional faculty taking part in the fully online program held August 17-21, 2020. With Claire Hay as the lead, the whole TLC team helped to make this event successful by building Blackboard course shells, developing new videos and workshop content, creating marketing, and mailing out welcome packages.
- Exciting new learning technologies are now available for UFV courses. In addition to the Micro Courses that were held spring, summer and fall, the TLC has created the following new workshops:
  - PeerScholar <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/peerscholar-training/>
  - Zoom <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/zoom-workshop-2/>
  - Padlet <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/padlet-workshop-2/>
  - WeVu <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/wevu-workshop-2/>
  - BB Ally <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/blackboard-ally-workshop/>
  - Camtasia <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/camtasia-workshop/>
- TLC's Indigenization Specialist, Lorna Andrews, offered the following workshops in August:
  - Educators Journey Towards Reconciliation <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/educators-journey-towards-reconciliation/>
  - Weaving Knowledge Systems <http://events.ufv.ca/tlc/events/weaving-knowledge-systems-2/>
- CECE has been piloting our new career education modules (Transferrable Skills and Careers Start Here) in virtual classrooms throughout the summer. Each module includes instructor lesson plans, student assignments, supporting resources (media, literature, videos), student assessments with answer keys, and instructor tips. Feedback from instructors has been positive, "impressive package of resources", "learning outcomes were clear with good supporting activities", and "looking forward to using this with future classes". CECE plans to continue piloting these modules in the fall semester.

## Our Students

- GDS students took part in a pavement mural project this past summer with CityStudio. The students tackled issues of diversity, inclusivity and access in urban planning to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The students prototyped innovative and equitable solutions to build post-pandemic resiliency, including through public art. As a result of these grassroots initiatives, a two-phase project has been envisioned under the CityStudio umbrella for Fall 2020
- Daily 15-minutes drop-in sessions are available for international students to offer support related to registration, fees, refunds, medical, per-credit transfers, and study permit and PGWP issues. In addition, specific "Travel to Canada" info sessions are now being offered every Tuesday and Thursday for the next few weeks.
- We are likely going to formally suspend all outbound mobility until Summer 2021. At that point, we will reassess. However, over the summer, our team has been compiling promotional videos from partner institutions and creating a series of PowerPoint presentations covering pre-departure information, culture shock, and risk abroad. Furthermore, we will be putting our International SOS membership in partial "hibernation" to save costs during this period.

- International Fall Enrolments:
  - There are 1660 international students registered and/or waitlisted (253 new / 1407 continuing).
  - The students are registered in 20,696 credits for a 12.47 credit average; 690 FTEs.
  - Waitlists are down 43% as compared to the same time last fall.
  - International students represent 51 different countries.
  - 85.3% of students with credit GPAs (excludes new and developmental students) are above 2.0. This is an improvement over the last couple of years.
- The Theatre Department's production of Antigone is moving online for fall 2020. Antigone is adapted and directed by Shelley Liebembuk and will be held on November 25-27, 2020 at 7 pm and November 28, 2020 at 2 pm. Performances will be live, via a virtual platform. For more info visit: [ufv.ca/plays](http://ufv.ca/plays).
- Students can receive reference assistance from the Library using our email or chat reference services. We are working on setting up a student reference appointment process using the Zoom video conferencing platform. This service should be available at the end of September or the beginning of October. This service will allow students to meet remotely with a UFV librarian to discuss their research assignments and information needs.
- Fourth course (Intensive format) for Master of Education in Educational Leadership and Mentorship successful run in July. Now, students move to working with their supervisors on their research
- Within Health Sciences, continuing with our steps towards antiracism, a group of students within the faculty have created a BIPOC student-led group. This group is intended as a safe space for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour students within the Faculty of Health Sciences. They are currently in the process of recruiting participants for this group.

### Our Community

- The Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research was successful in securing research contracts with the Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach in the areas of youth imitation firearms, intimate partner violence, low priority calls for service, and school liaison officer models.
- The Hope Centre will provide computer access and assessment services to UFV students and community members during the Fall. Michelle Vandepol, Hope Centre Coordinator, will be offering pre-booked access to computer workspace for students as well as invigilation, CPT, and upgrading assessment appointments. The dates and times available for booking will be published on the [Hope Centre website](#).
- Peace and Reconciliation Centre (PARC) is hosting its public launch on Thurs., September 24 from 12-2pm on Zoom. Register at [bit.ly/PARC-launch](http://bit.ly/PARC-launch).
  - Keynote by Hon. Bob Rae, Ambassador and Permanent Rep. of Canada to the UN
  - Remarks by Hon. Grand Chief Steven Point, UBC Chancellor and former BC Lt. Gov.
- Signed MOU with Bioenterprise's Food and Agri-tech Engine to establish an agritech accelerator at UFV ([article](#))
- Signed MOU with Cubic Farms and Nutriva to conduct climate change research in fodder production using the Hydrogreen system
- Ongoing discussions with Abbotsford Tech District developer and UFV collaboration ([article](#))
- Dr. Lenore Newman will be joining three other Canadian Research Chairs from UFV this fall presenting at the Virtual Science Café, Abbotsford. Dr. Newman will be speaking on October 6, 2020. The Virtual Science Café is a series of online informal talks, where anyone can come to explore the latest ideas in science, research and technology. <https://www.sciencetalks.ca/>

- In June, employees from Abbotsford's Parks, Recreation, & Culture team reached out to the School of Health Studies about creating a video for the city to show proper hand washing techniques. The city reached out to us specifically after seeing many inaccurate tutorials online and wanted to hear from the health experts. The video can be watched at:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=683757468847880&extid=QRLYvWx5FoE12scy>

Thank you to all those who contributed to providing these updates from the Faculties and Academic Units and thank you to all those at UFV who have persevered in the face of adversity over the past several months and in the months ahead of us.

Ey Si:yam  
Dr. James Mandigo  
Provost & VP Academic