

MEMO

FROM: Dr. James Mandigo, Provost and VP Academic
DATE: March 8, 2022
SUBJECT: Senate Provost’s Report

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COVID-19 Updates

On March 16, 2020, UFV announced that it was suspending classes for the duration of the week to enable faculty members time to transition to complete the remainder of the term remotely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. What followed was a two-year roller-coaster journey of working together to support our students and each other through some of the most challenging periods of our history.

Fast-forward two years later and consider the following data (as of March 7, 2022)

	Cases	Hospitalizations	Deaths	Vaccinations
British Columbia (BCCDC)	349,944	18,123	2,903	11,361,559
Canada (Health Canada)	3,323,338	134,279	36,986	81,201,228
Global (WHO)	440,807,756	N/A	5,978,096	10,704,043,684

As we approach the two-year anniversary of the WHO declaring a global pandemic, I encourage all of us to reflect upon the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on individuals, communities, and society. Every person has been impacted. The pandemic has also exposed many systemic inequities within and across communities that existed well before the start of the pandemic. It is why prioritizing the continuation of educational activities throughout the pandemic has been at the forefront of UFV, the Provincial Government, and the Public Health Officer’s response. Ensuring that educational activities can continue despite the obstacles created by the pandemic has ensured that vital scholarly activities and learnings can continue to advance our knowledge as a society and continue to redress systemic barriers faced by many. The evidence-based approach to the pandemic adopted early by Dr. Bonnie Henry and her team has also highlighted the critical importance that research and scholarly activity plays to solutions when dealing with major societal issues. I applaud the entire UFV community for their perseverance throughout pandemic and commitment and dedication to fulfilling our mandate each day.

Strategic Enrolment Management Plan

To support the implementation of the Integrated Strategic Plan, UFV is undergoing a renewal of its Strategic Enrolment Management Plan. A series of institutional focus groups following the results of the survey and consultations to date are also planned for the week of March 21st and I encourage everyone to participate at a time that is available to you.

Global Refugee Crisis

At the time of writing this report, the United Nations has reported that more than 1.5 million refugees have fled Ukraine and the civilian death count and casualties continues to increase exponentially each day following the invasion of Russian forces three weeks ago. These refugees join the 82.4 million people who were also forcibly displaced around the world in 2020 according to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHRC) from countries such as Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Myanmar. These numbers and the images and harrowing stories that accompany them are daunting, tragic, and overwhelming.

Within our integrated strategic plan, I am reminded of two of our strategic imperatives around Building Community that state:

- *Create opportunities for the world to positively interact with the Fraser Valley and for the Fraser Valley to positively interact with the world*
- *Build programs that educate our students to act as ethical and engaged global citizens who redress historical injustices*

Both imperatives speak to the importance of education to support peaceful societies and direct us to continually do the hard work that is necessary as part of peace and reconciliation. This work is not something that only happens during times of crisis. Rather this is work that needs to take place each day and not taken for granted. As a gathering place for learners, leaders, and seekers, I encourage all of us as active members of an educational institution to continually reflect upon the important role we can all play as free global citizens to actively support those facing injustices and displacement now and, in the days, weeks, months and years ahead.

To align my report with the Integrated Strategic Plan, I have reorganized the activities across the Academic Units under the Mission and Goals of Engaging Learners, Transforming Lives, and Building Communities. Thank you to all those who contributed to providing these updates from the Faculties and Academic Units.

Engaging Learners: Yoystexw ye totilthet

Provide inclusive learning environments for everyone

- FATS is working in collaboration with Seabird Island High school to offer an Explore Trades program via Industry Services. A site visit was held on February 16th, 2022, and further steps to explore this endeavour are continuing.
- Dr. Jason Brandenburg's research on blueberry supplementation on health and performance was highlighted in the National Nutrition Toolkit resource manual created by the USHBC
- Kevin deWolde held a field school information session on January 31st. The 2022 field school, study aboard opportunities, and the new International Business Major and Minor were discussed. Over 40 students have expressed interest in these types of international opportunities, over 30 students attended the information session, and over 20 people have signed up for more information on the 2022 field school.
- Registration for the Fraser Valley Regional Science Fair <https://www.ufv.ca/science-fair/> is now open. We are preparing for an in-person science fair to be held on April 7 at UFV. Dr. Ian Affleck, Caroline Majeau and Janice Nagtegaal from the Office of the Dean have been busy confirming award sponsorship and connecting with schools in the Fraser Valley. We are happy to report that all our award sponsors and students are thrilled to be back after a 2-year hiatus due to the pandemic.
- Dr. Geetanjali Gill, Assistant Professor in Global Development Studies, and Alicia Dyck, UFV alum, are featured in a [Globe and Mail article by Susanne Martin](#), published on February 25, 2022. The article profiles Dr. Gill's on-going projects, including the 'Leave No One Behind' project in Sierra Leone, and the role of Alicia Dyck, a student researcher funded by the Career Launcher program at Colleges and Institutes Canada.
- GDS student, Zain Zaidi, and UFV alum, Alicia Dyck wrote a [blog article for the BC Council for International Cooperation](#) about the current impacts of climate change.
- In the face of COVID 19, UNESCO has developed a publication titled *ResiliArt 100*, based on 100 recommendations for cultural policymakers that emerged from the ResiliArt project. SoCA Assistant Professor Aimée Henny Brown was chosen to be quoted in this publication, which accompanies one of the 100 recommendations to humanize the policy. The publication will also be transformed into an international open-source virtual exhibition.
- Adapted by Anna Griffith and Heather Robertson, and directed by Anna Griffith, the UFV Theatre department is excited to announce its upcoming production, *Pericles* by William Shakespeare.
- The Communications Department incorporated the Career Story Hacks contest into their professional communication course, CMNS 125, to facilitate students' participation in this work-integrated learning opportunity. Four current students from Dr. Sumin Fang's classes received prizes: Elias Dau, Ty Tran, Dhruv Patel, and Harjot Singh. The department would like to extend our congratulations to the instructor and students.

- The Centre for Education and Research on Aging (CERA) launched the fifth episode of their podcast: [Gero Nurses: Tales From the Front- Episode 5](#)

Transforming Lives: Ayeqet kw'e shxwaylexws

Provide opportunities for people to discover, develop, and share their gifts while also recognizing and celebrating the gifts of others

- Dr. Stefania Pizzirani, Assistant Professor from the School of Land Use and Environmental Change (SLUEC), along with other members from across campus have been busy organizing a series of events for March for Sustainability. March for Sustainability is a series of five free events that will take place throughout the month of March. <https://blogs.ufv.ca/science/2022/02/16/ufv-march-for-sustainability-events-register-today/>
- Dr. Lucy Lee was interviewed for The Scientist in an article entitled “Cultured Meat Advances Toward the Market” on Feb 14, 2022 Cultured Meat Advances Toward the Market | TS Digest | The Scientist (the-scientist.com) <https://www.the-scientist.com/bio-business/cultured-meat-advances-toward-the-market-69616>
- Dr. Lenore Newman was featured in CBC’s Quirks & Quarks on Feb 25, 2022 on the issue of “Feeding the Future” <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/quirks/quirks-quarks-feeding-the-future-1.6364707>
- [CHASI to research isolation and social connectedness](#): Thanks to new funding from the TD Bank Group, CHASI is undertaking research on isolation during COVID-19, specifically in youth and older adult populations. This timely project will bring together research from psychology, computer sciences, and sociology.
- Third year GDS student, Bailea Tayler, has been selected to be a delegate with [the BC Council for International Cooperation \(BCCIC\)](#) to attend the [United Nations Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW66\)](#) in New York from March 14-25, 2022.
- Anti-racism Panel: On January 20, 2022, the Teacher Education Department hosted a virtual panel entitled *Anti-racism in/and Education*. The panel was comprised of six diverse educators from the Fraser Valley who shared their wisdom with our pre-service teachers. Panelists were asked to share personal and/or professional experiences, how antiracism can be taught/supported/embedded in schools, what it means to be an antiracist educator, and/or a call to action for future teachers. The participating educators included classroom teachers, district-level support teachers, administrators, and superintendents from three of our partner districts (Abbotsford, Chilliwack, and Fraser-Cascade).

Building Community: Thayt kw'e st'elt'elawtexw

Collaborate and partner in pursuits that enrich the lives of all people on our campuses, in our local communities, and beyond

- Article by Liana Thompson – Liana’s article *Helping and then Hiring: Employers as Key Stakeholders in Career Education* is featured in this month’s CareeWise publication:
<https://careerwise.ceric.ca/2022/02/23/helping-and-then-hiring-employers-as-key-stakeholders-in-career-education/#.YhZtc996q71>
- The Agriculture Department along with UFV’s Ceremonies and Events Office hosted an information booth February 4, 2022, at the Abbotsford Canucks Game highlighting the Agriculture program.
- Dr. Stefania Pizzirani from SLUEC was an invited panel speaker February 15 for the BC Campus, HyFlex in Action Conference. The discussion, “The Human Elements of HyFlex”, examined the human aspects of HyFlex learning by bringing together students and instructors to share their lived experiences with teaching and learning in a HyFlex environment.
<https://bccampus.ca/event/hyflex-in-action-the-good-the-bad-the-ugly-event/>
- CHASI's lead researcher, Larissa Kowalski, was recently interviewed by two local publications about work CHASI completed on the topic of food security. The first interview is with [Fraser Valley Current](#), about the challenges surrounding Chilliwack's food programs. The second, with [The Cascade](#), covers the experiences of food insecurity and the realities of students who face it.
- UFV SoCA student Samantha Wigglesworth is currently exhibiting [Spectrum](#), at the Dawson Creek Art Gallery from January 14-February 25, 2022. This series helps to represent a small amount of what people in the LGBT spectrum can look like. While also focusing and starting the conversation that gender and sexuality are not mutually exclusive.
- Dr. Nikki Yee in the Teacher Education Department was the successful recipient of a collaborative SSHRC grant. The award will be used to support a national meeting of scholars using Education Change Networks to open decolonizing possibilities in education.
- Michelle Vandepol in the co-chair of Hope and Area Healthy Communities Committee which is planning Hope’s upcoming Mobilization Day in May. The purpose is to partner organizations from around the community to come together and plan issues to tackle together in a concerted community effort. Topics of social equity and community development are at the forefront of the group’s focus. This is an example of building community.
- On Wed Feb. 16, PARC hosted an insightful and timely online event, "Peace Talk: Understanding the Crisis in Ukraine", featuring three of Canada’s leading Ukrainian experts. Watch the recording [here](#).
- On Feb 16, the Esposito Family Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship ([EFCIE](#)) hosted an in-person event, "How established agricultural firms strategically renew their technology portfolios through Artificial Intelligence", with Dr. Michael Wustmans, Chair of Technology, Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship at the University of Bonn.

- On Feb 17, the Research Office presented Faculty Micro-Lectures. The event was held virtually for the first time and featured 22 faculty members showcasing their research in two minutes or less. Audio recordings of the individual presentations are in production.

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Provost & VP Academic