

*The following sections report on work underway and progress made regarding executive priorities for the current year based on TRU's vision and 10-year strategic change goals. There are also sections on Enabling Strategies/Operations and International Development/Community.*

## **Enabling Strategies/Operations**

**NEW SENIOR EXECUTIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2024-25** – Last month, the senior executive team met to discuss our strategic priorities for the coming year. The meeting was extremely productive and led to a new series of priorities to guide our activities and decision-making through 2024-25.

The team identified new priorities in key areas related to our 10-year strategic change goals, as well as priorities stemming from ongoing operational needs. The full outline of our strategic goals is appended to this report.

**ENROLLMENT OUTLOOK FOR 2024-25** — The current outlook for 2024-25 indicates that the total annualized number of TRU Learners will decline by just one per cent relative to 2023-24 (from 29,619 to 29,450). This includes a five per cent on-campus decline that is mitigated by the expected two per cent growth in open learning student headcount.

For Fall 2024, we are expecting an estimated 9,490 learners at our Kamloops and Williams Lake campuses. This includes 4,200 international students despite the challenges presented by IRCC policy changes.

Regarding international enrollment, TRU is on track to meet our international student targets for Fall 2024, contingent on successful visa conversions and other study permit factors. While we are expected to meet targets this year, we will face challenges replacing graduating students in later years.

Key challenges hampering our international student recruitment efforts include multiple changes in IRCC policy, practices, and rules, particularly with respect to eligibility for employment and permanent residency, reputational issues, lack of confidence in or negative sentiment toward Canada, and misinformation in international media. These factors have led to a decrease in international student applications, challenging our enrolment goals for 2025 and beyond.

Building on our strong reputation as a leader in international education, TRU is working hard to counter these challenges. TRU World is intensifying its recruitment efforts and seeking collaboration from faculty and industry experts to create new programs in high-demand fields,

such as STEM, ECE, and healthcare, and improve master's program offerings. We are introducing financial incentives like entrance scholarships to attract high-quality applicants and expanding partnerships via the Transnational Education team to meet enrollment demands.

Recruitment efforts are intensifying using both virtual and in-person methods, and the International Student Services team is enhancing its services to provide personalized support, emphasizing TRU's dedication to student success.

TRU has also partnered with BorderPass to assist students with study permit applications, aiming to increase approval rates. Regular communication with agents and potential students is maintained to counter misinformation and enhance recruitment confidence. The pre-assessment application system is being expanded to attract committed and financially capable students.

TRU is issuing Provincial Attestation Letters (PALs) to high-quality international applicants to improve visa conversion rates.

**SPRING CONVOCATION 2024** — From June 4 to 6, TRU held convocation ceremonies at both the Kamloops and Williams Lake campuses. In total, TRU awarded 2,757 credentials. These data can be broken down as follows:

- Williams Lake — 60 (4 Faculties/Schools: 13 in the Faculty of Education and Social Work, 4 in the School of Nursing, 2 in the Faculty of Science and 41 in the School of Trades and Technology).
- Kamloops — 2,279 (195 in the Faculty of Arts, 759 in the Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics, 386 in the Faculty of Education and Social Work, 121 from the Faculty of Law, 143 from the School of Nursing, 386 from the Faculty of Science, 25 from the Faculty of Student Development, 117 from the Faculty of Adventure, Culinary Arts and Tourism, 147 from the School of Trades and Technology)
- Open Learning — 418
- Indigenous students (all campuses) — Of the above, 198 credentials were awarded to students who have self-declared Indigenous ancestry (34 in the Faculty of Arts, 38 in the Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics, 33 in the Faculty of Education and Social Work, 3 in the Faculty of Law, 26 in the School of Nursing, 25 in the Faculty of Science, 2 in the Faculty of Student Development, 3 in the Faculty of Adventure, Culinary Arts and Tourism, 34 in the School of Trades and Technology).

**TRU SHARES INVESTMENTS PUBLICLY** — In response to growing interest in the institution's financial practices, TRU will publicly share details of its investments and list them annually on its

website. Beginning this year, TRU will post PDFs outlining the nature of its investments every year, a move designed to respond to people's growing interest in responsible investing.

The website with this year's statements can be found in the sidebar menu of the VP of Administration and Finance's web page: <https://www.tru.ca/vpadmin.html>. The statements will be redacted to remove some information as required by privacy laws; however, the funds TRU holds in its portfolio and their values will be detailed.

TRU's investment decision-making is intended to align with the United Nations' philosophy on socially responsible investing (SRI). This philosophy is embodied in the UN's Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), an initiative launched in 2006 in collaboration with the financial sector. The PRI provides a framework for investors to integrate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors into their decision-making processes.

Over the years, individuals have asked Canadian universities to divest from specific kinds of investments, especially stocks that conflict with environmental, social, and governance-related factors.

Three years ago, universities were asked to examine their holdings and divulge and divest stocks related or linked to the production of carbon. More recently, students at campuses across Canada, including TRU, have asked institutions to divest stocks related to companies that do business with or support Israeli interests.

**TRU FAST TRACKS WILLIAMS LAKE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM TO MEET DEMAND**—TRU has created an Early Childhood Education program specifically to address the labour shortage in Williams Lake and the area.

While this diploma program is usually 18 months in duration, the university has condensed it into 12 months. This is a one-time intake of this program in Williams Lake that should see graduates move quickly into careers after graduating.

The B.C. government has created additional financial incentives for eligible early childhood education workers, including a top-up of hourly wages and bonuses for certified infant, toddler, or special needs educators. The program is open now for applications, and classes will start in the fall. There are 25 seats available.

The ECE program increases the number of accessible, affordable, inclusive, and high-quality early childhood educators in the community, enriching the lives of children. The program also promotes inclusion and equality by alleviating some of the pressure put on primary caregivers, most often women.

**TRU'S SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE TEAM WINS GOLD FOR OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP** — TRU has won a national award recognizing its engagement in and commitment to sustainability goals and initiatives.

The university's Sustainability Office team is the 2024 gold recipient of Colleges and Institutes Canada's (CICan) Leadership Excellence Award for Managerial Staff. TRU team members include Vice-President of Administration and Finance Matt Milovick, Associate Vice-President of Campus Infrastructure, Sustainability and Ancillary Services Warren Asuchak, Sustainability Programs Manager James Gordon, and Manager of Energy Natalie Yao.

The award was given out on April 30 at CICan's [Connection Conference](#) in Calgary, Alberta. The annual event brings together post-secondary and institutional leaders and stakeholders from around the world to create networks and share their collective knowledge.

A video prepared for the awards event showcases the winning TRU Sustainability Office team and highlights recent sustainability achievements and plans. Watch the [video here](#).

## **Eliminating Achievement Gaps**

**TRADES STUDENTS BUILD UP SUCCESSES** — Six TRU trades students celebrated on the podium at the Skills Canada BC competition on April 17, bringing home one bronze and five gold medals in their respective trades.

Medal winners Giovanna Caputo, Alexis Nelson, Matthew Lavigne, Cody Rempel, Cole Allan, and Wyatt Daniel O'Brien were among 19 students representing the School of Trades and Technology in automotive, carpentry, culinary arts, electrical, heavy-duty mechanics, plumbing, and welding.

## **Leading in Community Research and Scholarship**

**REFLECTIONS ON THE TRU-BCWS PARTNERSHIP** — As announced in early April, TRU and the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) are establishing a partnership, presumed the first of its kind in North America, to develop new research, education, training, and innovation opportunities in addressing wildfire and its impacts on communities.

The partnership includes renewing BCWS training programs and developing and delivering future education programs ranging from certificates and diplomas to undergraduate and graduate degrees in wildfire and emergency management. TRU will also collaborate with BCWS on research initiatives and innovation to ensure BC is well-equipped to address the ever-changing wildfire landscape. Research and innovation will continuously inform the learning curriculum.

With this wide range of activity, TRU will cover everything related to wildfire fighting, management, and prevention from (as Premier Eby stated at the launch on April 4 in the OLARA study hall) basic skills to post-doctoral research. Minister Ralston added that BCWS will construct a new state-of-the-art training campus at TRU. TRU will participate fully in shaping these future developments.

We call this comprehensive approach, which integrates research, education, training and innovation, TRU Wildfire. This initiative builds on TRU's current expertise and commitment to leading world-class research, training, and innovation to improve how British Columbians adapt to living with wildfires. See <https://www.tru.ca/tru-wildfire.html>.

### *Five years in the making*

The groundwork for this month's announcement was laid by TRU faculty, administration, and governing bodies over the past five years, including:

- The Interior Universities Research Coalition – TRU worked with our IURC partners, UNBC and UBCO, to develop wildfire science as an essential focus in the years following the difficult 2017-18 fire seasons, supported by the mayors of Interior cities. TRU Wildfire has its origins in inter-university and university-community collaboration and is being designed to continue that collaborative philosophy.
- Key research faculty – In 2020, the province funded the BC Innovation Research Chair in Predictive Services, Emergency Management and Fire Science through a \$5 million endowment granted to TRU. TRU used this endowed research chair to attract leading Canadian fire scientist Dr. Mike Flannigan to B.C. TRU then used one of our tri-agency-funded research chairs to hire Dr. Jill Harvey as Canada Research Chair in Fire Ecology. They were joined by long-time TRU faculty member Dr. Lauch Fraser, NSERC Industrial Research Chair in Ecosystem Reclamation. Drs. Flannigan, Harvey, and Fraser span a range of research from prediction to on-site investigation to reclamation and form the nucleus of a growing network of faculty and students at TRU who focus on wildfire science and the creation of safer, more resilient communities, including social and health impacts as well as Indigenous cultural fire. (See <https://www.tru.ca/research/research-centres/wildfire-science.html>). TRU Vice-President of Research Dr. Shannon Wagner, appointed in this role in 2023, represented TRU and led the development of the TRU-BCWS partnership to this breakthrough moment. Vice-President Wagner built on the work done by her predecessor, Dr. Will Garrett-Petts, as well as Dr. Flannigan's excellent connections and esteem in the wildfire community. Dr. Wagner engaged in countless hours of in-depth planning with provincial officials to lay the basis for what has been announced.
- In 2023, TRU opened a new research building to house the core wildfire faculty team and their research. The centre is near a newly built entrance to campus, TRU Way, located between the Early Childhood Education Centre and Veterinary Technology.
- In 2023, the TRU Senate and the Board of Governors approved the establishment of the TRU Institute for Wildfire Science, Adaptation, and Response (IWSAR) as the vehicle for supporting and developing academic wildfire science education and research. IWSAR is led by Dr. Flannigan as its scientific director and is designed to engage collaboratively across campus and beyond. IWSAR embodies TRU's side of the TRU-BCWS partnership.

Leadership matters. Dr. Wagner's leadership as vice president and Dr. Flannigan's as a scientific director are central to the success achieved so far. At the same time, success has many parents — numerous faculty, staff, and students have provided essential support to create TRU Wildfire. While we are still in the early planning stages for the operationalization of TRU Wildfire, with more details to come, I'd like us all to take a moment to recognize and congratulate colleagues who have put significant work into getting us to where we are today.

*A partnership that will continue to develop*

The plan and partnership outline urgent and ambitious training requirements, including the need for more than 1,000 workshops per year by 2028-29 and more than 10,000 course registrations. The government has announced intakes for initial program training beginning in 2025; this will be for non-degree-credit training. Our well-established PLAR process will be critical in providing an opportunity for this non-credit training to count for credit toward future education. TRU Wildfire will work with BCWS to develop and offer research-informed, leading-edge non-credit training as soon as possible.

Importantly, this training is not only for BCWS employees. As identified by the premier's recent task force on emergencies, other agencies and municipal and First Nations officials require similar training. Important objectives of the new programs will be to make training interoperable and mutually recognizable so that officials of different agencies and citizens can more easily work together and to make training more accessible for all British Columbians.

Our partners have further identified that wildfire training is not enough. Fighting wildfires is less and less a part-time seasonal job and more and more a year-round profession. Retention of experienced firefighters and supervisors is important so that practical knowledge can be passed on, and career progression is critical to keep and develop talent and leadership. In addition, responding and adapting to wildfire requires new and different knowledge in an era of climate change, including a better understanding of ecology and prediction, Indigenous cultural fire knowledge, community engagement and health. For these reasons, BCWS will also need specialists educated at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in wildfire-community studies.

TRU Wildfire will be TRU's vehicle for working with BCWS to develop academic program proposals. These proposals will be brought through the TRU and provincial existing program review and approval processes. TRU has already flagged in initial discussions that increased numbers of faculty members and funding for these positions will be required.

TRU has demonstrated its commitment to redirecting chairs and faculty positions into wildfire science, and we are continuing discussions with the province regarding additional funding requirements. Also, the proposed fields of knowledge will include science, community, health and Indigenous knowledge and may not fit neatly in TRU's existing structures. We may need to define new disciplinary or interdisciplinary structures to address the spectrum of agency and community

needs. TRU is committed to considering our partner's needs and bringing appropriate proposals through regular approval processes.

As mentioned, the province plans to build a state-of-the-art training and education centre at TRU, owned and managed by TRU, to train wildland firefighters, communities, and students. Initial conversations have begun about the design and provincial funding for such a complex.

While all this is a lot, it is also only a beginning. B.C. is a leader in wildfire response and management, and the new TRU-BCWS partnership will increase and entrench that leadership, leading to new opportunities. Students and faculty at other universities within B.C. and beyond will be interested. Now that the government's announcement has been made, it is important to connect network researchers and institutes at other universities to TRU Wildfire in its founding spirit of collaboration.

Many other provinces, too, have fire-fighting services, and several federal agencies and institutions are involved. New partnerships will be formed interprovincially, nationally, and globally, as many agencies and communities in countries across the globe will no doubt be interested in sharing and learning with TRU Wildfire.

#### *Significance of TRU Wildfire*

When fully realized, TRU Wildfire will have an impact unprecedented by any single initiative in TRU's history as a university. However, the scale of the activity is not the main point. Instead, two things stand out. First, TRU Wildfire reflects our history and character as an institution. Second, it reveals important features of who we are becoming.

When I think about who we are as TRU and what guides our behaviour, I think of our values. Based on our vision of Kw'seltnéws (honouring all our relations) and respect for all people, our values honour inclusion, diversity, equity, community-mindedness, curiosity, and sustainability. TRU Wildfire expresses our character and identity in all respects. It fundamentally links curiosity and new understanding to practical needs, wisdom, and impacts in communities.

We will foster world-leading knowledge in wildfire science, adaptation, and response applicable to local communities and draw on their existing knowledge; we will link the full postsecondary spectrum from basic training to advanced research. We will engage underserved and marginalized populations. And it is all about sustainability. TRU Wildfire is not the only initiative that expresses TRU's values, but it is an important initiative that represents all our values very well.

We are a university rooted in a rural region, closely engaged with the Secwépemc, as well as other First Nations, Métis, and nearby small communities that face fire risk on the land. We look forward to working with knowledge keepers and others on how we can bring greater respect to and work

with the land and people in keeping with our university values. TRU Wildfire expresses our commitment to the land and our location in the Interior and Secwepemcúl'ecw.

TRU Wildfire also expresses how we are changing and who we are becoming as a university. At an institution-wide level, TRU has developed some areas of academic prominence; I would highlight Indigenous community health as one such emerging area of leadership. Wildfire adds another such institution-level concentration.

While universities can, should, and will have as many research and teaching projects as they do faculty members, it is also significant for institutions to develop a small number of large initiatives because these make possible long-term partnerships and collaborations with much greater impact than individual actions alone. TRU Wildfire represents the kind of partnership that will positively reinforce and, in some cases, change how people think of our university. Such breakthroughs are rare and are something for everyone to be proud of.

Please see the BC Government news release for more on the provincial announcement. For more on TRU Wildfire, visit [www.tru.ca/TRUwildfire](http://www.tru.ca/TRUwildfire). If you are interested in learning more, please send a message to [wildfire@tru.ca](mailto:wildfire@tru.ca). Watch [video highlights](#) of the announcement.

**SHOWCASING TRU WILDFIRE'S PARTNERSHIPS AND PLANS** — Vice-President Research Shannon Wagner represented TRU recently at the Institute for Defense and Government Advancement's Wildfire Technology Management Summit in Pasadena, California.

This summit was one of the first formal opportunities to share information about the unique partnership between TRU and the British Columbia Wildfire Service (BCWS) and highlight the impact that research-informed education and training will have on helping society adapt to living with wildfires.

Wagner co-presented with David Greer, BCWS's Director of Strategic Engagement and Partnerships, on Innovations in Wildfire Management Education and Research. The presentation reflected the concept of TRU Wildfire — its ecosystem model that integrates research, education, training, and innovation — and advanced the idea that climate adaptation and wildfire studies should be a fully recognized academic and research discipline.

Over two days, speakers, leaders, and wildfire professionals from federal, state, local and international agencies explored innovations in wildland fire prevention, detection and suppression.

The presentations, discussion and other information shared at the summit reinforced that traditional ways of thinking about wildfire are no longer adequate and the need for new research is urgent. Conference participants underscored the vital importance of expanding wildfire prevention and mitigation efforts in coordination with suppression. The summit also emphasized the impacts of wildfire are broad and far-reaching, affecting the whole of society.



The summit also featured new wildfire innovations, including early detection camera systems and data visualization tools, and provided valuable insights into how data provision, product testing and efficient connections between service vendors and wildfire agencies can be incorporated into TRU Wildfire's innovation arm.

**TRU / BCWS COLLABORATION ON PROMOTIONAL VIDEO** — TRU and the BC Wildfire Service recently collaborated to produce a video promoting the value of TRU Wildfire. The video premiered at the Canadian Council of Forestry Ministers Conference in Cranbrook on June 5. See the video here: [TRU x BCWS \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRUxBCWS)

**TRU RESEARCHERS AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS FEDERAL GRANTS** — Canada's research community has received over \$1.7 billion in funding for researchers and students nationwide, including three faculty members at Thompson Rivers University (TRU).

Competitive research awards enhance the careers and knowledge of faculty members, provide opportunities for students through scholarships and work as research assistants, contribute to improvements in communities, and strengthen TRU's reputation, which aids in future recruitment of faculty and students.

### **Emerging Research**

SSHRC Insight Development Grants support research in its initial stages, building knowledge and understanding about people, societies, and the world by supporting research excellence in the social sciences and humanities:

- Dr. Scott Rankin, Business and Economics — New theories of people management in social enterprise

The research team, led by Scott Rankin and Salvador Barragan, along with Bruce Martin, Tolulope Oluwafemi and Melanie Reed, is studying human resource management and leadership within social enterprises and social-purpose organizations. These are businesses that try to accomplish social and environmental impacts or goals, as opposed to for-profit businesses. This research will be passed on to future social enterprise managers and contribute to their ability to achieve social missions more effectively.

- Dr. Kimberly Thomas-François, Tourism — Information communication technology at hotels: A route to sustainable development

Thomas-François aims to generate knowledge on the level of technological integration at hotels in Canada. She will assess the willingness of Canadian hotels to integrate technology into their day-to-day operations in a manner that improves their overall sustainability. A higher level of integration may also contribute to more efficient and

sustainable operations and help address some concerns, such as labour shortages in the sector.

### **Research Partnerships**

NSERC Alliance Grants encourage collaboration between researchers and partners from different sectors to generate new knowledge and apply research results for Canada's benefit:

- Dr. Omer Waqar, Engineering — Scalable and trustworthy machine learning over the wireless edge networks

In partnership with his global collaborators from the University of Glasgow, Scotland, Waqar plans to design innovative, scalable, and trustworthy machine-learning models. These models will be designed with a distributed architecture, making them ideal for deployment over wireless edge networks. Additionally, they plan to develop customized radio resource management strategies tailored to support the unique requirements of the distributed machine learning models. Waqar received his NSERC Alliance International Catalyst Grant while at TRU and currently holds an assistant professor role at the University of the Fraser Valley.

The [Research Support Fund](#) provides a portion of the costs associated with managing the research funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Natural Science and Engineering Council (NSERC), such as salaries for staff who provide administration support, training costs for workplace health and safety, and library maintenance.

**TENURE AND PROMOTIONS 2024** — Tenure and promotion represent important milestones in any faculty member's career and reflect an individual's achievements over time in teaching, research, and service as evaluated by peers. I am pleased to announce the names of those faculty members recently awarded tenure and promotion, effective July 1, 2024. Please join me in congratulating these individuals and wishing them continued success.

### **Awarded Tenure**

#### **Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics**

- Dr. Rhonda Dever, Human Enterprise and Innovation
- Dr. Yong Joo Kang, Accounting, Finance and Law
- Dr. Scott Rankin, Human Enterprise and Innovation
- Dr. Trent Tucker, Management, Information and Supply Chain

#### **Faculty of Arts**

- Dr. Rebecca Fredrickson, Literatures, Languages, and Performing Arts

- Dr. Heather MacLeod, Communication and Visual Arts / Literatures, Languages and Performing Arts
- Dr. Lindsey McKay, Environment, Culture and Society
- Dr. Jennifer Shaw, Environment, Culture and Society / Philosophy, History and Politics

#### **Faculty of Education and Social Work**

- Dr. Brad Harasymchuk, School of Education
- Roxane Letterlough, School of Education
- Saskia Stinson, University and Employment Preparation

#### **Faculty of Law**

- Dr. Blair Major, Law

#### **Faculty of Science**

- Dr. Shirin Boroushaki, Mathematics and Statistics
- Cael Field, Respiratory Therapy
- Tara Geiger, Veterinary Technology
- Dr. Piper Jackson, Computing Science
- Dr. Fatma Mahmoud, Mathematics and Statistics
- Dr. Natasha Ramroop Singh, Biological Sciences
- Dr. Mridula Sharma, Computing Science

#### **Faculty of Student Development**

- Susan Butland, Counselling, Academic Supports and Assessment
- Jenna Goddard, Counselling, Academic Supports and Assessment
- Jamie Noakes, Career and Experiential Learning

#### **Open Learning**

- Dr. Carol Sparkes, Learning Design and Innovations

#### **School of Nursing**

- Arleigh Bell, Nursing
- Shari Caputo, Nursing

#### **School of Trades and Technology**

- Darren Watt, Mechanical

## **Awarded Promotion**

### **Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics**

- Yong Joo Kang, Accounting, Finance and Law, promotion to associate professor
- Dr. Scott Rankin, Human Enterprise and Innovation, promotion to associate professor

### **Faculty of Arts**

- Dr. Rebecca Fredrickson, Literatures, Languages, and Performing Arts, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Heather MacLeod, Communication and Visual Arts / Literatures, Languages and Performing Arts, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Lindsey McKay, Environment, Culture and Society, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Jennifer Shaw, Environment, Culture and Society / Philosophy, History and Politics, promotion to associate teaching professor

### **Faculty of Education and Social Work**

- Dr. Laura Doan, School of Education, promotion to professor
- Dr. Brad Harasymchuk, School of Education, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Roxane Letterlough, School of Education, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Rebecca Sanford, School of Social Work and Human Service, promotion to associate professor
- Saskia Stinson, University and Employment Preparation, promotion to associate teaching professor

### **Faculty of Law**

- Dr. Blair Major, Law, promotion to associate professor

### **Faculty of Science**

- Dr. Shirin Boroushaki, Mathematics and Statistics, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Cael Field, Respiratory Therapy, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Wendy Gardner, Natural Resource Sciences, promotion to professor

- Tara Geiger, Veterinary Technology, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Piper Jackson, Computing Science, promotion to associate professor
- Dr. Fatma Mahmoud, Mathematics and Statistics, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Natasha Ramroop Singh, Biological Sciences, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Dr. Mridula Sharma, Computing Science, promotion to associate teaching professor

#### **Faculty of Student Development**

- Susan Butland, Counselling, Academic Supports and Assessment, promotion to counsellor II
- Jenna Goddard, Counselling, Academic Supports and Assessment, promotion to instructional support II (Senior Writing Centre Coordinator)
- Jamie Noakes, Career and Experiential Learning, promotion to instructional support II (Senior Co-op Coordinator)

#### **Open Learning**

- Dr. Michelle Harrison, Learning Design and Innovations, promotion to associate professor

#### **School of Nursing**

- Michelle Borgland, Nursing, promotion to teaching professor
- Shari Caputo, Nursing, promotion to associate teaching professor

#### **School of Trades and Technology**

- Jason Dabner, Construction Trades, promotion to associate teaching professor
- Mike Turley, Construction Trades, promotion to associate teaching professor

# THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

## DRAFT EXECUTIVE PRIORITIES 2024/2025

*Our Vision: Community-minded with a global conscience, we boldly redefine the university as a place of belonging — Kw'seltkne'ws (we are all related and interconnected with nature, each other, and all things) — where all people are empowered to transform themselves, their communities, and the world.*

*TRU's strategic context for 2024/25 is defined, particularly, by the opportunity to develop TRU Wildfire, as well as by the importance of managing risks with respect to domestic students, international students, and government grants (which represent all of TRU's major revenue sources) as well as talent recruitment, retention, and engagement.*

### Overarching Goals

Goals	Sub-Goals
Continue to develop TRU Wildfire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research (RETI)</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Building</li> </ul>
Approval of Academic and Open Learning Plan (Senate) and 3-year implementation strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of 'flagship' or halo program areas: ecological justice and environmental studies; health</li> <li>• Healing; technological, social, and economic transformations</li> </ul>
Development of multi-stage programs of Honours College certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum development and approval; Senate approval of new HC</li> <li>• Research Hub to support research integrated learning for undergrad and grad</li> <li>• Creation of interdisciplinary curriculum and pan-institutional co-curricular opportunities focused on experiential learning and high impact learning</li> <li>• Successful creation of HC minor and School of HC with appointed Faculty</li> <li>• Intention of creation of 5 micro credentials</li> </ul>

<p>Drive a resource allocation process that reflects SEM targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic rebalancing use of surplus for: faculty hires in flagship program areas and research excellence, domestic student recruitment; Finance team and ITS investments</li> </ul>
<p>Complete and start implementing strategic internationalization goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan approved</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure institutional financial sustainability through international enrolment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligning SEM goal</li> </ul>
<p>Achieve brand alignment across the university</p> <p>Branding baseline – Need consultant to assist</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage third-party to test brand identity by conducting focus market research and focus group testing</li> <li>• Divert low stakes work to third-party, ensuring consistency of brand use across campus, while focusing MarCom staff resources on most strategic, high impact work.</li> </ul>
<p>Begin preparation for TRU Institutional-wide fundraising campaign</p>	
<p>Staff and resource government relations operations understanding our market realities</p> <p>Working with provincial and federal government relations advancing portfolio relationships. Expanding our impact with government relations</p> <p>Further developing and strengthening relationship TteS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract for Director of University Relations out of Vancouver and staffing in Kamloops?</li> </ul>

<p>Create matrix of campus-wide ceremonies and events including the identification of strategic of stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide event management support to the Office of Indigenous Education</li> <li>• provide event management support to the Secretariat</li> <li>• Manager of Ceremonies and Events to report to VPUR</li> <li>• campus calendar syncing of events and guest lists to be managed for all events so people who should be invited are being invited</li> </ul>
<p>Continue working to enhance succession capabilities in all executive offices.</p>	
<p>Carry out a comprehensive update and revisions to the Board Bylaws and Manual now that the Manual is 10 years old.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of March and early April, work with the consulting group within the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) to develop a budget, contract and timetable for conducting the revisions.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop new/renewed, Campus Sustainability Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin consultants on new CSP</li> <li>• Complete plan for January 2026</li> </ul>
<p>Finalize campus master plan revisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan to be completed for Fall 2024</li> </ul>
<p>Conduct review of Exempt compensation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze Mercer data</li> <li>• Identify recommendation for change and consult with relevant stakeholders</li> <li>• Implement changes</li> <li>• Managers be responsible to allocate</li> </ul>
<p>Conduct Compensation Equity Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equity analysis</li> <li>• Workload analysis</li> </ul>



<p>Low Carbon District Energy System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete design and begin construction (spring 2024)</li> <li>• Analyze viability of phase II</li> <li>• Work with Advancement for naming gift to offset capital</li> </ul>
<p>Housing Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and build EVP2 if funded (complete for 2026)</li> <li>• Submit daycare/EVP3 family housing project to treasury board</li> </ul>
<p>Administrative Portfolio Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full portfolio administrative and operational efficiencies review (tied in with rebalancing)</li> <li>• Create administrative review process/template for 7-year review process (according to policy)</li> <li>• Identify and implement 3-5 “pain point” projects to improve services across campus</li> </ul>
<p>Talent Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch and rebrand the people plan after “Culture Conversations” are complete</li> <li>• Work with MarCom and Provost’s office to develop a campus employee recruitment strategy / campaign</li> </ul>
<p>Major ITS Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete and implement new flexreg replacement</li> <li>• Complete and launch new CRM</li> <li>• Begin digital strategy consultations</li> </ul>
<p>Establish Operational model for Wells Gray facility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize booking system</li> <li>• Establish regular maintenance / operations schedules</li> <li>• Develop annual operating budget</li> </ul>

Equalize Attainment Rates	
Goals	Sub-Goals
Establish baseline data for comparative participation and attainment rates of populations in TRU's service region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replicating this analysis periodically and analysing any trends. When we have data, we may wish to look at it to devise intervention or communication strategies to affect the rates</li> </ul>
Promote Study Abroad as a high impact practice for TRU students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting national average of 2%</li> </ul>
Carry out Strategic recruitment and retention of graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate reflected in SEM</li> <li>Marketing and Communication around grad studies</li> <li>Planning for process to develop graduate strategic plan</li> </ul>
Change from NWCCU to creation of internal continuous improvement processes focused on student success (persistence and graduation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Centre/Office of Mission Fulfillment with continuous improvement mandate aligned with change goals and institutional learning outcomes</li> </ul>
Achieve Student Experience strategic plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align external reviewer recommendation of FSD; new leadership structure to ensure responsiveness to student experience and well being</li> <li>Begin renewal of 'collegium' renovation of Old Main to expand Student Street with focus on accessible and inclusive services</li> </ul>

Honor Truth, Reconciliation, and Rights	
Goals	Sub-Goals
Utilize GSO funding to provide expanded international opportunities to indigenous students	
Profile TRU's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, and a university welcoming of Indigenous faculty, staff and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content on internal and external communications channels as well as through paid and earned media. (track year over year)</li> <li>• Specific recruitment campaign targeting Indigenous students</li> </ul>
Continue to build Indigenous Research as foundational research pillar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for All My Relations and Knowledge Makers (UNFAO relationship)</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention of Indigenous tripartite faculty</li> <li>• Recruitment of S7extekékstmen</li> <li>• Support for Indigenous research ethics process (e.g., SNREG or alternate)</li> </ul>
Establish an Indigenous Identity framework or guiding principles that are grounded in UNDRIP, human rights, and employment law. Focus on welcoming Indigenous student staff and faculty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a campus wide consultation process inclusive of external Indigenous legal scholars, that focuses on education of community</li> <li>• Including 2<sup>nd</sup> House, WL Campus</li> </ul>
Complete design and start construction of Indigenous Education Centre (to be completed 2026)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete design end of July 2024</li> <li>• Begin construction August 2024</li> <li>• Seek ministry funding for sustainability components of the building (\$4M)</li> <li>• Work with advancement for naming opportunity</li> </ul>
Complete ministry indigenous post-secondary framework mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Template completed 2023</li> <li>• Executive inventory</li> </ul>
Implement Indigenous building naming project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete residence naming project</li> <li>• Start campus building naming project</li> </ul>

Lead in Community-Engaged Research	
Goals	Sub-Goals
<p>Increase marketing and communications to build TRU's reputation as a research university</p> <p>Enhance TRU's recognition and reputation around prospecting students and faculty members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build out profile for Wildfire Institute, experts</li> <li>• Increase faculty engagement, submissions to The Conversation Canada to have their work profiled in prominent media</li> <li>• Consider ranking lists where we might be a good fit (e.g., we fit much better in Macleans than we did because research/awards have grown so much)</li> </ul>
<p>Build undergraduate, graduate and faculty research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue high level of research funding</li> <li>• Increase faculty development/networking opportunities</li> </ul>
<p>Continued effort to build and support community and institutional research relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IURC</li> <li>• City of Kamloops (RiR Wildfire)</li> <li>• TNRD</li> <li>• Chu Cho, Teck etc (Industrial partnerships)</li> </ul>
<p>Develop continuous improvement framework to assess high impact student research experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of Office of Mission Fulfillment (see above)</li> </ul>
<p>Embed research experience in Honours College curriculum (field schools, faculty mentorship)</p>	

## Design Lifelong Learning

Goals	Sub-Goals
Establish leadership structure and strategic plan that transitions open learning towards TRUly Flexible learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete review and redevelopment of 135 courses</li><li>• Restructuring of enrolment services systems to integrate TFL students and TFL courses</li></ul>
Expand International Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fully recover from COVID to reach revenue generating status</li></ul>
Build funding and reputation of graduate studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recruit ongoing leadership</li><li>• Plan pan-institutional graduate infrastructure</li><li>• Plan new programming</li></ul>
Continue to develop the TRU Credit bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revise and resubmit proposal to Ministry for 5 years of funding</li></ul>