

Meeting:	Board of Governors		
Meeting Date:	March 6, 2026		
Agenda Item (as on the agenda):	B6 – President and Vice-Chancellor Report		
Purpose (1 of):	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation (motion) <input type="checkbox"/> Decision <input type="checkbox"/>		
Prepared by:	Shelagh Rowles	Approved by:	n/a

## PRESIDENT & VICE-CHANCELLOR REPORT

### I. **Opening Statements:**

The past few weeks have been difficult. Students, faculty and staff were feeling anxiety and uncertainty as we navigated the reality of possible labour disruption. Some sad things happened. For instance, the University withdrew from our contracts to provide food services, equipment, and space for the Arctic Winter Games. We lost an opportunity to welcome students on campus and highlight our amazing programs and services. Tensions from unresolved collective bargaining also created fractures in the relationships among faculty, staff and the university administration. That was hard.

Despite the challenges the union and the University faced, I believe the tentative agreement is fair and reasonable and reflects the hard work and compromises of both bargaining teams. I would like to thank both bargaining committees for their efforts and commitment during what were intense negotiations. I am truly hopeful that a disruption will be avoided, and that our students will be able to finish their semester uninterrupted.

I am proud of how our students expressed their concerns and explored pathways to participate in the Senate's consideration of scenarios for completing their studies in the event of a labour disruption. It has revealed some gaps in our academic policies that clear direction (and willingness) now exists to close. I believe this experience has underscored the role of the University's governing bodies and the importance of student participation on the Board and the Senate.

### II. **Key Updates:**

#### **Enrolment**

The Board approved YukonU's Strategic Enrolment Management Plan in September 2024. The Plan identifies that the Optimal Enrolment Composition includes:

Domestic Indigenous Students	International Students	Domestic non-Indigenous
25% of all enrolments	15% of all enrolments	60% of all enrolments

On February 5, the Registrar's Office reviewed the University's 2025-26 annual enrolment numbers. The table below is a snapshot only, as the 2025-26 academic year does not end until August 31, 2026. The enrolment snapshot on February 5 shows that of all credit and apprenticeship students enrolled at YukonU from September 1, 2025, to February 5, 2026, including:

Domestic Indigenous Students	International Students	Domestic non-Indigenous
24% of all enrolments	17% of all enrolments	59% of all enrolments

This year, the University has seen a 50% decrease in new International Enrolment. As predicted in the Office of the Registrar's enrolment report to Senate last year, there is a 50% decrease in new incoming International Winter 2026 enrolment compared to Winter 2025.

The Office of the Registrar's enrolment projections anticipate ongoing, further decreases in international enrolment in future academic terms due to the number of Yukon University programs of study that have recently been deemed Post-Graduate Work Permit ineligible by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Significant Increase in Winter Domestic, Indigenous Enrolment: There is a 32% FTE increase in Domestic, Indigenous Winter 2026 enrolment compared to Winter 2025, due in part to increases in Office Administration, Yukon First Nations Arts and Skills for Employment enrolments.

### **Roundup AME Conference in Vancouver**

I attended this year's Roundup AME Conference in Vancouver along with Dan Anton, Aisha Montgomery and several CNIM faculty and staff. In addition to attending conference events, Dan, Aisha, Ginny Coyne and I had the opportunity to meet with several mining companies, including Fireweed Metals, Casino Mining, and Fuerte Metals. Both Fireweed Metals and Casino Mining have representation on the CNIM Governing Council. Fuerte Metals purchased the Coffee Creek site from Newmont. We anticipate they will also join the CNIM Governing Council.

### **Faculty and Staff Housing in Communities and Student Housing in Whitehorse and Dawson City**

In January, David Morrison and I met with the new Minister of Education, Scott Kent. Minister Kent asked if the University was experiencing challenges in accessing housing in Yukon communities. He also asked about student housing in Dawson City and Whitehorse. I confirmed our housing shortages were challenging for community employees and acute for student housing. He expressed interest in connecting us with Yukon Housing to explore opportunities for collaboration to address these housing needs. I will be meeting with the Deputy Minister of Education and the President of Yukon Housing to begin these conversations.

### **Strategic Planning**

Yukon University's strategic plan sunsets in 2027. The University must begin planning to develop a new strategic plan. I have proposed to the Board's Governance Committee that the Board adopt a 50-year strategic planning model at its June meeting. A 50-year planning model takes intergenerational stewardship into account, helping the University avoid short-term planning that fails to consider its long-term growth and sustainability, or its evolving relationships with Yukon First Nations governments. Within the plan, we propose identifying goals and strategies to be accomplished over 5, 10, 15 years, etc.

### **Meeting with Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs)**

The President's Executive Council and the Provost Council had a lunch meeting with many Yukon Government ADMs from a wide range of departments. The luncheon was an opportunity to build connections and identify potential areas for collaboration between the University and the Yukon Government. The parties agreed to continue these sessions. We anticipate our next meeting will include a full campus tour. The executive team will meet with Yukon Government Deputy Ministers on March 31.

### **President's Executive Council Retreat in Pelly and Carmacks**

On February 16 and 17, the President's Executive Council (PEC) held a retreat at YukonU's Hets'edän Kú' Campus in Pelly Crossing and the Carmacks Campus. While the executive were in our planning sessions, Elder Nina Bolton, Dan Anton, Tamara Vance, Bobbi-Lee Melacon, and Nicole Percival met with Elders and other community members at the campuses. In addition to some important planning sessions, we held open houses during the noon hour for community members. Campus Committee Chair took us on a comprehensive walking tour of Pelly Crossing. Tamara Vance took us on a walking tour of Carmacks.

### **Arctic Security Summit**

Many faculty and staff attended the Arctic Security Summit. I was pleased to open the Yukon University panel on Arctic Security. With Provost Bronwyn Hancock moderating, our panel members included Professor Norma Kassi, faculty member and past Little Salmon Carmacks Chief Nicole Rondeau, Associate Professor Sara McPhee-Knowles, YukonU graduate David Gatensby, Permafrost Research Chair Fabrice Calmels and Professor Norma Shorty. The panel provided a comprehensive picture of what Arctic security meant to them in their work. They were all amazing, and together they offered a snapshot into how complex the topic of security is within Yukon and across the North. So many people told me they wanted to hear more from faculty and students at the University.

### **YukonU Foundation Update**

Work continues in the quiet phase of the capital campaign in support of the new science building. Our primary objective remains securing two to three major gifts in the \$250,000–\$500,000 range to position us for a confident and successful public launch. We remain optimistic that, once the campaign goes public, we will be able to attract a strong volume of mid-level contributions in the \$5,000–\$20,000 range to help close the campaign. As previously noted, these contributions must be anchored by the larger leadership commitments identified above. We continue to pursue external funding opportunities beyond the territory. An application to the RBC Foundation is underway, and the University is preparing and submitting applications to prospective national donors, including Royal Bank of Canada, Scotiabank, and Finning International. These discussions and submissions are focused on securing contributions in the \$100,000–\$250,000 range to strengthen the campaign's leadership base.

### **Associate Vice-President Reconciliation**

Lindsay Moore will continue acting as Associate Vice-President, Reconciliation until the end of August. The main priorities over the coming months will be to ensure work plans are in place for the team and to continue travelling to community campuses as much as possible.

### **Elders on Campus**

Highlights from the Elders on Campus Program

- Elder Sarah Lennie attended the Justice Our Way conference on February 17 and 18, 2026
- Elder Nina Bolton travelled to Pelly and Carmacks to host Open Houses at the campuses on February 16 and 17
- Bobbie-Lee Melancon is scheduled to return to her role as Elders Coordinator at the end of February
- We are continuing to partner with the Whitehorse Correctional Centre YU campus to bring program supplies, such as beading, and connect with learners
- Recent events in the Elders Lounge have included: Jigging Competition, storytelling, beading and monthly Indigenous student feasts
- The Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED) has been introducing Indigenous youth to the Elders Lounge during lunchtime. YFNED is bringing groups of students to the Ayamdigut campus for "trades samplers," providing opportunities for Indigenous youth to gain exposure to trades.

## **EleV**

EleV is a Mastercard Foundation partnership program aiming to transform education and employment for Indigenous youth. YukonU has an agreement through EleV supporting 15 transformative projects—both internal initiatives and external collaborations—through five Indigenous partnerships. Each project is focused on driving systemic change in Yukon's post-secondary education system to support Indigenous youth better. The EleV team is developing a Communications Plan to ensure that information about the projects is being shared with internal and external partners over the coming months.

## **First Nations Initiatives**

Highlights from First Nations Initiatives

- The FNI team is continuing to update the course material for YFN 101. Updating course material involves working with a course designer to revise the format and accessibility of the technical components, as well as updating the data, statistics, and information in the course content. There are several Yukon First Nations who have created, or are creating, local versions of the YFN101 course, so FNI also provides direct support for course development with Yukon First Nations, as requested.
- Wild meat project- Members of our team have been gathering information about the needs and current barriers to serving meat, such as moose, rabbit, etc., within the University context. This involves working with the Food Services team, YG Environmental Health, the Elders on Campus program, and external partners such as Whitehorse General Hospital First Nations Health Programs to collaboratively navigate barriers and implement necessary changes, such as food storage spaces, freezers, etc.
- Committee and Working Group engagement-The FNI team is involved in several working groups, such as the Strategic Enrolment Management plan – Enrollment Sub-Committee, the Polaris project, the YukonU Art Committee, Convocation planning, Land-Based safety policy development processes, Post-Secondary Graduation planning group and Roddy's Camp Working Group

### III. **Report on Senate:**

**Motions** – The following motions were carried:

#### January 21 Senate

- MOVED and SECONDED to approve the meeting agenda with the title change for item 4(a) from "Academic Calendar Changes" to "Academic Disruption Plan for Winter 2026 semester". CARRIED
- MOVED and SECONDED to approve the consent agenda item - Senate minutes, November 19, 2025. CARRIED
- MOVED and SECONDED by Doug McRae to move into an in-camera session. CARRIED
- MOVED and SECONDED to move out of the in-camera session. CARRIED
- MOVED to adjourn at 4:59 pm. CARRIED

#### February 18 Senate

- MOVED and SECONDED to approve the meeting agenda, with the removal of item 10 - YukonU Student Financial Awards with academic standing (Winter), deferring it to the next regular meeting. CARRIED.
- MOVED and SECONDED to approve the consent agenda item, Senate minutes, January 21, 2026, as presented. CARRIED.
- MOVED and SECONDED to approve the proposed Senate Elections Important Dates 2026; in case of a labour disruption, Senate Elections will take place when normal operations resume, per the Timeline adjusted accordingly by the University Secretariat. CARRIED.

- MOVED and SECONDED that the Senate establish an ad hoc committee to develop and recommend an Academic Disruption Plan for the Winter 2026 semester, comprised of the following:
  - Ernie Prokopchuk, Jeff Wolosewich, Drew Lyness, Victoria Castillo, Julie Hawkins, Beth Chisholm, Tara Stehelin, Sara McPhee-Knowles, Joel Macht, Andrew Richardson, Fiona Schmiegelow, Bronwyn Hancock, Office of the Registrar Designate, David Estuardo Rojas Lasso, Mandeep Singh
  - The ad hoc committee shall conclude its work prior to the Special Senate Meeting called before March 2, 2026. CARRIED.
- MOVED and SECONDED to extend the meeting. CARRIED.
- MOVED and SECONDED to remove agenda item 8 – Year Over Year Enrolment Analysis, deferring it to the next regular meeting. CARRIED
- MOVED and SECONDED to approve
  - a. The name change for EL 110 from "Responsive Relationships in Early Learning" to "Responsive Relationships with Children", effective Winter 2027.
  - b. The creation of the new course EL 201.
- MOVED and SECONDED to recommend to the Board
  - The approval of the proposed program changes for the Early Learning Diploma, effective September 2026. CARRIED
- MOVED to adjourn at 6:12pm. CARRIED

#### February 26 Special Senate

- MOVED and SECONDED to adopt the proposed Academic Disruption Plan, as amended by Senate, in the event of an academic disruption during the Winter 2026 semester as recommended by the ad hoc committee. CARRIED.
- MOVED and SECONDED to adopt the additional recommendations by the ad hoc committee, as amended by Senate.

#### IV. **President's Key Engagements (Dec 15 to March 6):**

##### *Meetings in Advancement of Government Relations*

- Dec 15 – Meeting with Canada's Arctic Ambassador, Virginia Mearns
- Dec 16 – Meeting with Polar Knowledge Canada's Board
- Jan 8 – Meeting with Mary Cameron, DM of Education
- Jan 19 – Meeting with MP Brendan Hanley
- Jan 22 – Meeting with the Minister of Education, Scott Kent
- Jan 30 – Surface Rights Board
- Feb 6 – Meeting with Assist. Deputy Ministers Advisory Council (ADMAC)
- Feb 24 – Meeting with Raymond Farrell, Policy Analyst, Department of National Defense
- March 5 – Federal Rural Development Roundtable hosted by MP Hanley, invited by Secretary of State for Rural Development, Buckley Belanger

##### *Meetings & Engagements in Advancement of Yukon University Programs & Research*

- Dec 18 – Meeting with Dr. Bill Owen, Interim President and Vice-Chancellor, UNBC
- Dec 18 – Meeting with Denis Beausoleil, Community Relations Coordinator of Fireweed Metals Corp
- Dec 19 – Meeting with Kwanlin Dün First Nation leadership
- Dec 23 – Meeting with Yukon Law Society
- Jan 13 – Meeting with Isabelle Salessé, Director, Association Franco-Yukonnaise
- Jan 15 – Meeting with Ta'an Kwäch'än leadership
- Jan 26 – Meeting with Fireweed Metals Corp
- Jan 27 – Meeting with Casino Mining
- Jan 27 – Meeting with Fuerte Metals

- Feb 13 – Meeting with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in officials concerning 17.7
- Feb 19 – Meeting with Dr. Laura Spitz, Dean, and faculty members from the Faculty of Law, UCalgary Faculty of Law
- Feb 24 – Meeting with Courtney Clark, the Director of Strategic Coordination and Outreach for MINDS in the Department of National Defence
- Feb 24 - Meeting with Carolyn Dubois, Executive Director of Gordon Foundation and Dr. Florence Glanfield, Vice-Provost, Indigenous Programming and Research (UAlberta)
- Feb 25 – Meeting with Randa Abader (Mng of ITE Partnerships and Granting) and Bill Mintram (Dir of Indigenous and Northern Relations from the Rideau Hall Foundation.
- March 3 – CYFN Archives and Digitalization Project meeting
- March 3 – Meeting with Yukon Native Language Centre

*Engagements as Representative of Yukon University*

- Dec 15–17: ArcticNet in Calgary
- Jan 26–27: AME Roundup in Vancouver
- Feb 23-25: Arctic Summit in Whitehorse
- Feb 25: Arctic Summit, Opening Remarks for YukonU presentations

*Yukon Community Visits*

- Feb 16 – Pelly Crossing
- Feb 17 - Carmacks

*Submitted February 27, 2026*

Dr. Shelagh Rowles  
Interim President & Vice-Chancellor  
Yukon University