

# Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



## Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Newsletter

### Updates on Strategic Initiatives

#### Strategic Enrolment Management

The Strategic Enrolment Management Plan draft document is nearing its final stages.

Over the spring and summer, the SEM initiative engaged a wide cross-section of the UWinnipeg community through surveys and dialogue:

- An **SEM Information Session** was held in Convocation Hall on May 13, followed by two **SEM Engagement Sessions** on May 20 (in person) and May 27 (online). These events drew participation from over 155 faculty, staff, and students.
- On June 13, five distinct **SEM surveys** were distributed to the UWinnipeg community:
  - Faculty
  - Undergraduate students
  - Student advising staff
  - Student recruitment staff
  - All other staff

These surveys gathered feedback on priorities related to **recruitment, retention, academic programming, and teaching and learning**.

Thank you to the more than 800 students, staff, and faculty who participated in the surveys. Your insights are being integrated into the draft SEM Plan.

### **Next Steps:**

- Feedback from both the engagement sessions and surveys is being incorporated into a revised draft, which will be shared at a final engagement session in early fall.
- The finalized SEM Plan will be reviewed by Faculty Councils and the Senate Academic Planning Committee, and will ultimately be presented to Senate and the Board of Regents for formal approval.

Many thanks to the members of the SEM Steering Committee for their continued commitment to this important initiative.

### **Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee**

This committee met on June 6 to review past and present resources for teaching and learning across UWinnipeg. Preliminary discussions included:

- Building an online **Teaching and Learning Hub**
- Planning the development of a **Teaching and Learning Centre**

The next meeting will take place on **August 18**, with updates to follow in the autumn.

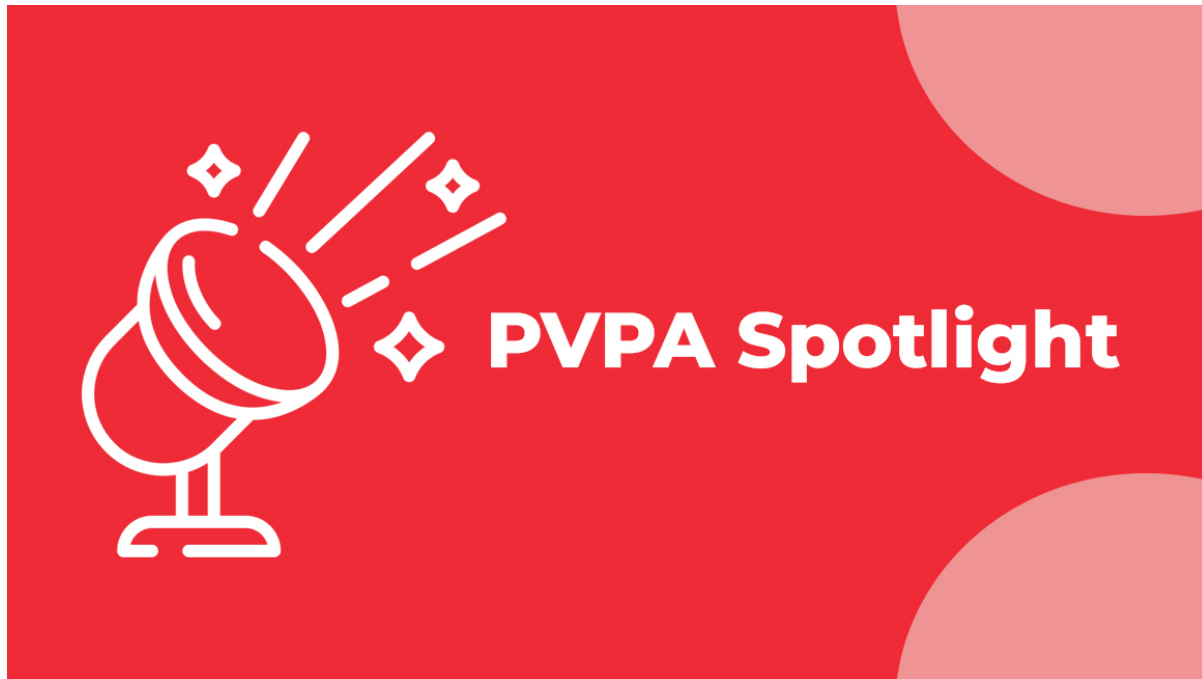
### **Work-Integrated Learning Committee**

Thank you to all faculty and staff who volunteered to serve on the Work-Integrated Learning Committee. This group will help shape an **institutional strategy for experiential learning**, including co-op, practicum, and community-engaged models. The committee will meet for the first time in August.

### **BIPOC and Indigenous Initiatives and Events Funds**

Beginning in 2024, the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, has allocated funding to each Faculty/College (Arts, Business and Economics, Education, Global College, Graduate Studies, Library, and Science and Kinesiology and Applied Health) to support BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) and Indigenous initiatives and events.

Faculty and staff may apply to their respective Deans/Directors for up to \$1,000, following the instructions below:



### **UWinnipeg Staff and Faculty Awards 2025**

The University of Winnipeg honoured five outstanding faculty and staff members—Dr. Alan Diduck, Dr. Désirée Vanderwel, Pamela Delorme, Dr. Andrew Frey, and Thiago Nunes—during our 126th Convocation this past June. [Read more.](#)

#### **Pamela Delorme – Stars of Spence Street Prize**

Pam Delorme, Office Assistant in the Department of Biology since 2001, is a beloved pillar of support for students and faculty alike. Known for her warmth, wisdom, and legendary problem-solving skills, she has played a key role in launching UWinnipeg's first PhD program and continues to be a trusted and empathetic presence in the department.

#### **Dr. Alan Diduck – Professor Emeritus**

A founding force in the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences, Dr. Alan Diduck is recognized for his exceptional career in teaching, research, and community engagement. With more than two decades of service, he has shaped programs, mentored countless students, and led impactful environmental research across Canada and beyond.

#### **Dr. Andrew Frey – Erica and Arnold Rogers Award for Excellence in Research and Scholarship**

An internationally recognized physicist, Dr. Andrew Frey is renowned for his research in string theory and quantum gravity. With over 1,800 citations and a deep commitment to student mentorship, he exemplifies research excellence and continues to push the boundaries of theoretical physics.

### **Thiago Nunes – Campus Sustainability Recognition Award**

Thiago Nunes, Director of Building Infrastructure, is driving UWinnipeg's sustainability goals forward. From launching energy dashboards to leading solar and biomass energy projects, his data-driven approach and collaborative leadership are helping transform the campus into a greener, more efficient place.

### **Dr. Désirée Vanderwel – Clifford J. Robson Award for Teaching Excellence**

A dynamic and dedicated educator, Dr. Désirée Vanderwel is known for her engaging teaching and unwavering support for student success in chemistry. Her work in developing open-access textbooks and flexible course delivery models demonstrates her commitment to innovation and inclusion in science education.



### **Golden Key Honour Society at UWinnipeg**

The **Golden Key International Honour Society** invites students whose GPA ranks in the top 15% to join.

The UWinnipeg chapter offers:

- Leadership opportunities
- Volunteer placements (e.g., Siloam Mission, Canadian Blood Services)
- Three scholarships

In recognition of its success, the UWinnipeg chapter has earned the prestigious **Key Chapter Award** for **ten consecutive years**, **setting a Canadian record in 2024**.

This year's Chapter Advisor is UWinnipeg alumnus Ferdinand (Reke) Avikpe, now pursuing NSERC-supported research towards his PhD in Biomedical Engineering at the University of Toronto, and this year's Chapter President is Betselot Betemariam, who is in the final year of her BSc in Biochemistry.

For questions or to get involved, please contact [uwinnipegk@gmail.com](mailto:uwinnipegk@gmail.com)



### **Celebrating the First Graduating Cohort of Build from Within – Ozhitoon Onji Peenjiiee**

The University is proud to celebrate Joanna Lawrence, Mackenzie Taylor, and Sara Vandal, the first graduating cohort of **Build from Within – Ozhitoon Onji Peenjiiee**, a teacher education program for Indigenous students. This milestone reflects deep community collaboration and transformative educational impact.

Through a partnership with the Winnipeg School Division and Indspire, Build From Within provides Indigenous students a pathway to an Education degree along with a full complement of supports and hands-on classroom experiences. In this unique

program, students finish Grade 12 with both a high school diploma and an educational assistant diploma. They are then able to enter the BEd program at UWinnipeg to complete their degree.



### **Wesmen Men's Volleyball: Summer Highlights and Historic Achievements**

UWinnipeg's Wesmen Men's Volleyball had an outstanding spring and summer marked by record-breaking performance, national recognition, and international opportunities.

- **The Wesmen clinched the Canada West conference championship for the first time in program history**, finishing the season with a 17–3 conference record and securing the No. 1 seed at the U SPORTS Men's Volleyball Championship for the 2025 tournament.
- **Luke Lodewyks** was selected for Canada's U21 national team and competed in both the NORCECA U21 Pan American Cup and the U21 World Championship in China.
- **Conor Rewniak, Easton Dick, and Maxime Vermette** were named alternates for the Canada U21 squad in the same summer.
- **Easton Dick** received the 2025 Mark Tennant Award as Volleyball Manitoba's U20 Player of the Year for his exceptional performance.
- **Maxime Vermette** competed in the All Nations Tournament, aiming to defend his championship title from the previous year.

### **Two graduating Wesmen are embarking on professional careers overseas:**

- **Isaiah Olfert** joins Energiequelle Netzhoppers in Germany, following a standout season and pivotal role in the Wesmen's championship-winning run.

- **Ben Traa** signs with Vingåkers Volleybollklubb in Sweden, becoming the first Wesmen alumnus in that club's history.

### **Additional Congratulations**

- Wesmen newcomer **Sebastian Verdaguer**, the 2025 MCAC Player of the Year, has joined the team from Providence College—a high-calibre recruit with Olympic aspirations.
- **Dustin Ross**, coach of the U17 WinMan team, earned Volleyball Manitoba's Elite Coach of the Year award.
- Alumni legends **Don Michalski** and **Garth Pischke** won the 70+ USA National Championship in Denver in May, notably dominating their field.
- Alumnus coach **Lindsey Habib** will lead Team Manitoba at the upcoming Canada Summer Games. Current Wesmen **Kal-EI Wilson** and **Augustine Okose** have earned roster spots and will represent Manitoba indoors.

### **Mark the Dates: Wesmen 2025-26 Schedule Released**

- The Wesmen will start the 2025-26 Canada West season on the road, with a bye in Week 1 followed by games at Fraser Valley on **October 24–25**.
- The home opener—when the team raises its first Canada West banner—will be **October 31–November 1** vs. Trinity Western at the Duckworth Centre. Key home games include matches vs. Calgary, MacEwan, Manitoba, and Brandon throughout the season.



## **Updates on Searches**

### **Dr. Danielle Defries appointed Acting Dean of the Gupta Faculty of Kinesiology and Applied Health**

UWinnipeg is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Danielle Defries as Acting Dean of the Gupta Faculty of Kinesiology and Applied Health, effective July 1, 2025. Dr. Defries has served as Department Chair of Kinesiology and Applied Health since 2021. [Read more.](#)

### **Osaed Khan appointed Dean of the University of Winnipeg Collegiate**

UWinnipeg is pleased to announce that Osaed Khan has been appointed as Dean of the University of Winnipeg Collegiate, beginning a five-year term on August 1, 2025. [Read more.](#)

### **Dr. Tabitha Wood appointed Acting Dean of the Faculty of Science**

UWinnipeg is pleased to share that Dr. Tabitha Wood has been appointed as Acting Dean of the Faculty of Science, effective July 1, 2025. Dr. Wood previously served as Dean of the Faculty of Science and brings continuity and experience to this

interim role. [Read more.](#)

### **Gabrielle Prefontaine reappointed Dean of the Library**

Congratulations to Gabrielle Prefontaine for being reappointed to a third five-year term as Dean of the Library, beginning July 1, 2026. [Read more.](#)

Gabrielle will be on academic leave from July 2025 to June 2026 with Emma Hill Kepron serving as Acting Dean and Sam Popowich as Acting Associate Dean during this time.

### **Dr. Laurie-Ann Hellsten reappointed Dean of the Faculty of Education**

Congratulations to Dr. Laurie-Ann Hellsten for being reappointed to a second five-year term as Dean of the Faculty of Education, effective July 1, 2025. [Read more.](#)

### **New PVPA Website**

Check out the [new website](#) for the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic. Here you can find information on our strategic initiatives, supports for faculty, and updates on leadership searches, as well as key office contacts.

### **Feedback and contact information**

If you have any questions or comments about the contents of this newsletter, feel free to contact the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, at [provost@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:provost@uwinnipeg.ca).

[Contact page](#)



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