Message from the President – January 2009

The start of every year presents an opportunity for me to try something new. I took up snowboarding after years of schussing down the slopes on two boards. More recently, I learned to drive a motorcycle. I trained for my first marathon in 2001 and have since completed five marathons and eight half-marathons. Running continues to challenge me but it has become an important part of what I do. In 2009, I plan to revisit a previous goal – to try to golf more often. I’ve taken lessons a few times, but have yet to make it a regular part of my life.

Trying something new is part of my personal commitment to wellness. It forces me to move outside of my comfort zone and to grow through that experience. It can challenge me on a number of levels. Running, for example, challenges me physically as well as intellectually, socially and even spiritually.

Wellness comes to us from many facets of our lives. One definition of wellness says that it embraces seven dimensions of well-being – physical, social, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, environmental and financial – into a quality way of living. It’s about striving to live life to the fullest and maximizing personal potential.

This description of wellness is from our University’s UR Well website, located at [http://www.uregina.ca/recservices/Wellness/index.html](http://www.uregina.ca/recservices/Wellness/index.html). I highly recommend everyone visit the site and find out more about the dimensions of wellness and resources on campus that support the well-being of our students and employees. Many of these resources, like our Fitness and Lifestyle Centre, are also available to our alumni and the public.

A quick browse through the website reveals many things we may not have considered in the wellness equation. For example, Counselling Services can help students who need support and guidance managing stress, which can negatively affect emotional health. We can also exercise our spiritual wellness by taking up yoga, or participating in activities offered by our campus chaplaincies. There are endless opportunities to take part in social activities on campus, join clubs and sports, make friends and network, and balance our lives through exposure to music, theatre and the fine arts. And we can all enjoy the beauty of Wascana Park at our doorstep.

I encourage everyone to strive to create balance and well-being in your lives, and to promote a healthy community on our campus. Try to find ways to get to the gym, visit the art gallery, take in a noon hour lecture, listen to a concert, join a club, participate in intramural sports, or visit colleagues in other parts of the campus and your own units.
I encourage our administration to provide employees with leeway so they can have time for these activities. And I challenge all our faculty and staff to become models for our students. They are the next generation and we need to show them that it’s okay to see a professor put on a pair of runners and go for a brisk walk around the campus loop or participate in badminton at noon.

For our students, take advantage of the many services available to you, and take time to enjoy the spaces in our buildings. New construction on campus is being designed with greater attention to student meeting space, recognizing that getting an education is not only about learning a subject area and earning a degree; it’s also about interacting with and learning from each other.

Let’s all participate in making this a healthy campus community. This is my personal challenge and my challenge to you for 2009.