

President's message – August 2014

I hope this message finds each of you well and that with this week's consistently warm temperatures, you have been enjoying the best of another Saskatchewan summer.

With August here, we are reminded that the beginning of a new academic year is just around the corner. I know that in one way or another all of you are preparing for the influx of students that will descend on our campus later this month. This is an exciting time of year for our students, and with that in mind we have a number of special events and activities planned for them that are organized around the start of the new semester.

These events provide us with great opportunities to make a positive first impression on our new students, and welcome our returning students back to campus. If you want to be a part of the excitement, why not consider volunteering for one of our semester kick-off events? By clicking [here](#) you can sign up for Residence Move-in Day on August 30, Welcome Weekend activities on August 31, or Orientation Day on September 2. Better yet, why not sign up for all three days!

While many students use the four months between the end of the winter semester and the start of the fall semester to gain valuable job experience or catch up with family and friends, some have embarked on exciting global excursions that are taking their studies beyond the classroom and making a positive impact on the world around them.

Earlier this summer, a cross section of students from across campus took part in a two-week study trip to Italy led by David Meban, an Associate Professor of Classics at Campion College, and Francesco Freddolini, an Assistant Professor of Art History at Luther College.

Traveling to Rome, Pompeii, Florence and other Italian cities, the students, many of whom had never travelled outside Canada, enjoyed great Italian art and culture. According to the students, the experience – seeing the art and cultural sites in person – brought their studies alive in a real and meaningful way. While there, they also enjoyed that other significant Italian cultural offering – delicious pizza!

Seven students from the University's Social Work Program are spending the summer in Nepal, where they are participating in an international social work practicum. Two students, April Nechvatel and Daphene Lyn, are among a group of students working in the community of Pharping, about 25 kilometres outside Kathmandu, where they are helping to equip a youth centre.

Their goal is to create a centre that houses those things we take for granted in similar facilities in Canada: computers, the Internet, a library, games, and other resources. The students are helping fill a huge need in a community where many do not have access to books or computers.

In addition to these adventures, 22 of our geology students will travel to Iceland at the end of the month to discover first hand the volcanic island's fascinating array of geological features. Because of Iceland's unique geology, students will be able to witness, among other things, the effects of the separation of the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates, which happens

directly beneath the island nation. It's one of the few places on earth where this separation occurs above sea level – a unique opportunity indeed.

I'm so proud of our students who choose to broaden their educational perspectives through international travel and global exchange. These kinds of experiences undoubtedly benefit them and make them better students as a result. But it doesn't end there. These experiences also make them better citizens of the world – something from which we all benefit.

Please take the time to enjoy what's left of our summer! I hope you have many opportunities to relax, spend time outdoors, visit family and friends, and enjoy everything that this time of year has to offer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor