



UNIVERSITY OF  
SASKATCHEWAN



# The Institutional Positioning Project

Amid an increasingly competitive post-secondary landscape, the U of S needs to ensure that it is doing all that it can to positively influence its reputation in the minds of all its stakeholders. Through the institutional positioning initiative, we aim to pinpoint the University of Saskatchewan's unique place within Canada's post-secondary education sector.

[www.usask.ca/positioning](http://www.usask.ca/positioning)

## INSTITUTIONAL POSITIONING

**Our position must reflect our history and build on our strategic directions,** our foundational documents and our integrated plans in order to clearly define who we are. It must be compelling, exciting and applicable to all aspects of our operation. Our positioning strategy, much more than our logo or advertising, will act as a compass for aligning our institution across all stakeholder touch points.

We will define the U of S position through a highly engaging process of extensive research and consultation with key U of S stakeholders. We will develop a clear institutional positioning statement that describes how the U of S is distinct among its competitor institutions, and that is relevant to its key stakeholders.

### Our positioning principles

Where we can answer the following three questions in a clear, concise and compelling way, we have found our position in Canada's post-secondary education sector.

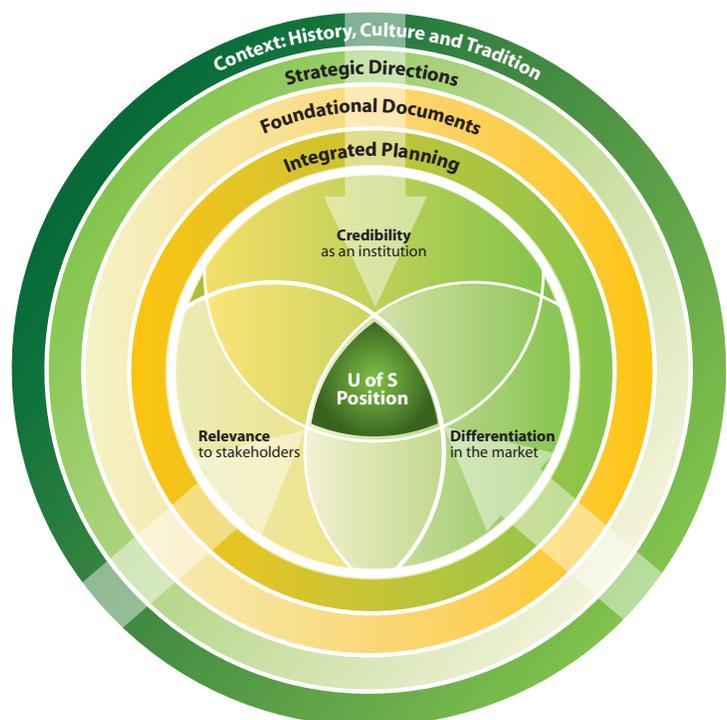
- 1. Differentiation:** What is special, unique or distinctive about the University of Saskatchewan and the experiences we provide?
- 2. Relevance:** What matters most to our key stakeholders?
- 3. Credibility:** How can we ensure that our key stakeholders believe in and trust our newly defined position?

### Our engagement strategy

We have identified over 45 key internal and external stakeholder groups, from students and faculty to community partners and government. In this highly consultative process, these groups will be involved in initial consultation and research, provide input on possible positioning options, and provide input on visual expression options. All the data we receive from our key stakeholders will feed into the President's Executive Council's decision-making process.

### Outcomes and deliverables

At the project's completion, we aim not only to have the answers to the above three questions, but also to disseminate the answers to our key stakeholders with the ultimate goal of defining, enhancing and strengthening the University of Saskatchewan reputation. We will have an institutional positioning statement that accurately defines the U of S in the minds of its stakeholders and that acts as the foundation upon which we will build a solid reputation.



## Our governance model



### Steering Committee Members

**Heather Magotiaux**, Project Chair and Vice-President,  
University Advancement

**Karen Chad**, Acting Vice-President, Research

**David Hannah**, Associate Vice-President,  
Student and Enrolment Services

**Lawrence Martz**, Dean,  
College of Graduate Studies and Research

**Janusz Kozinski**, Dean, College of Engineering

**Pauline Melis**, Assistant Provost,  
Institutional Planning and Analysis

**Kelly McInnes**, Director, Human Resources

**Barb Phillips**, Professor & Rawlco Scholar in Advertising,  
Edwards School of Business

**David Parkinson**, Professor, College of Arts and Science

### Resource Group Members

**Carla Vipond**, Project Co-ordinator and Acting Director  
of University Communications, University Advancement

**Sharon Scott**, Manager of Information Technology and  
Communications, Student and Enrolment Services Division

**Kathryn Warden**, Director,  
University Research Communications

**Mike Klein**, Marketing & Communications Specialist,  
University Advancement

**Jennifer Molloy**, Projects Co-ordinator,  
University Advancement

**Sarah Ivany**, Communications Co-ordinator,  
University Advancement

### External Partners

A formal Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued to contract the assistance professional service providers throughout this initiative. The successful partners are Interbrand ([www.interbrand.com](http://www.interbrand.com)) and Educational Policy Institute ([www.educationalpolicy.org](http://www.educationalpolicy.org)).

# INSTITUTIONAL POSITIONING

## TIMELINE

### Phase 1

**Research and Analysis**, May-October, 2009

- Institutional Positioning Steering Committee Planning Meeting
- Hold interviews with senior leaders and faculty to develop a detailed understanding of the vision for the U of S
- Begin analyzing any available data and collecting new data where required
- Positioning Symposium with senior leaders to determine who we should be targeting and what drives their decisions
- Conduct stakeholder research
- Develop a set of positioning options

### Phase 2

**Defining the U of S Position**, November-December, 2009

- Hold a Positioning Options Workshop to discuss and refine positioning options
- Conduct validation research with critical target audiences to determine which of the options is most compelling
- Finalize the new U of S positioning statement

### Phase 3

**Expressing the U of S Position**, January – March, 2010

- Develop options for verbal and visual expression of brand
- Conduct validation research with critical target audiences to determine which of the options is most compelling
- Develop brand guidelines
- Recommend brand architecture
- Recommend marketing strategies

### Phase 4

**Launch**, April 2010

- Launch the newly defined position internally using tools developed in phase 3 (Brand Orientation Module for use in Train-the-Trainer session)

## GLOSSARY

PEC	President's Executive Council, the governing body leading the institutional positioning project
IPSC	Institutional Positioning Steering Committee, members reporting to and making recommendations for approval by PEC
IPRG	Institutional Positioning Resource Group, members to provide support to the IPSC
IB	Interbrand, one of the two external partners to assist the U of S throughout the duration of this project
EPI	Educational Policy Institute, one of the two external partners to assist the U of S throughout the duration of this project
Key U of S Stakeholders	Can include all or one of the following: prospective students, parents, guidance counselors, teachers, alumni, employers, potential faculty and staff, government funders, research granting agencies, donor prospects, industry partners, the higher education community and the general public
IPSC Planning Meeting	(formerly known as kick off meeting) a phase 1 meeting with the external partner and IPSC to collect perspectives on the U of S strengths and weaknesses and its opportunities and challenges
Leader Interviews	a series of phase 1 meetings with senior U of S leaders
Positioning Symposium	(formerly known as decision drivers workshop) a phase 1 meeting with the external partner and IPSC to determine "who" the U of S should target and "what" drives their decisions
Positioning Options Workshop	a phase 2 meeting with the external partners and IPSC to discuss pre-determined positioning options and to evaluate those options based on criteria
Positioning Validation	qualitative research with critical target audiences to confirm which of the positioning options is more compelling
Identity Validation	qualitative research with critical target audiences to confirm which of the visual identity concepts is more compelling

## Comments

All thoughts, suggestions and feedback are welcome and can be directed to [positioning@usask.ca](mailto:positioning@usask.ca). For more information, visit: [www.usask.ca/positioning](http://www.usask.ca/positioning).



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