Provincial Throne Speech Delivered

On November 19, 2012 the Second Session of the 40th Legislature began with the Speech from the Throne. The speech commits to keep Manitoba's fundamentals strong and keep the economy growing, improve health care, create opportunities and ensure Manitoba remains a great place to live.

Highlights specific to the U of M include reference to the near completion of Project Domino, the new Active Living Centre and Investors Group Field, the historical redevelopment of the former Southwood Golf Course for mixed use, the expanded nurse practitioner program and the continued commitment to fund one-third of the cost of the second phase of rapid transit to the University.

International students were also a key focus in the speech. Steps will be taken to support international students and coordinate efforts by all Manitoba universities and colleges to promote Manitoba as a destination for international students.

The speech also indicated the Premier’s Economic Advisory Council will convene a Skills Summit, mandated to offer advice on how to meet the target of 75,000 more workers by 2020. The Skills Summit will focus on four themes:

1. Excellence in education to ensure young people are prepared for the jobs of tomorrow;
2. Apprenticeships and training to connect Manitobans with jobs in the trades and keep building our province;
3. First Nations and Metis labour force development for these growing populations; and
4. Growing our successful immigration strategy

Other highlights include finalizing the new Growing Forward 2 program to allow for new investment in innovation and technology on the farm and in our food industry, supporting new research projects, including investigations into priority areas for wetland conservation and restoration, tracking phosphorous release from flood prone areas, and aquatic risks from toxic algae, and increasing medical residencies to train more family doctors.

Lobbyist Registry Update

In response to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics report recommendations, the federal government is planning changes to The Lobbying Act. Treasury Board Minister Tony Clement has indicated that the range of public servants covered under the Act will be expanded. Most critically for universities, Minister Clement has indicated that the intent to require board members to register as lobbyists under the Act is not being considered.

Currently board members do not need to register as lobbyists if less than 20 percent of their time is committed to lobbying activities. The Committee recommended reducing this threshold to a single lobbying activity. Minister Clement indicated that while government agrees with the intent of the recommendation, the administrative burden would be unacceptable.
AUCC Federal Budget Submission

On November 23, 2012 the AUCC provided Federal Finance Minister James Flaherty with its pre-budget submission *Universities: Putting Ideas to Work for Canadians*.

The theme of this year’s submission is that during these uncertain economic times, Canada must draw upon the ingenuity, creativity and new ideas produced in our universities. The submission makes 6 specific recommendations:

1. Enhance funding for the research granting councils by $110 million in 2013 to strengthen core discovery research programs, including the institutional costs of research, recognizing the particular strength that the social sciences and humanities provide to society.

2. Provide an additional $40 million to be directed to the granting councils to increase emphasis on international research collaboration, through their existing programs.

3. Invest $15 million, to be matched by private sector investments, in internships and work experience programs such as the kind managed by Mitacs, to better connect graduate students to private sector companies.

4. Accelerate and intensify international research collaboration at scale with priority countries. An initial commitment of $75 million – $25 million targeted to India, China and Brazil respectively – to be delivered through a new mechanism that is nimble, responsive and based on excellence and peer review.

5. Invest an additional $20 million in 2013 for international education marketing. The previously committed $5 million is urgently needed to support existing marketing efforts being undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

6. Fund the proposal of Indspire to seek an immediate commitment of $20 million from the federal government for postsecondary scholarships for Aboriginal students, to be matched by the private sector, with an additional $30 million to be matched by the private sector when the first $20 million has been raised.

CIC Changes will impact international student programs

Citizenship and Immigration Canada is introducing changes to its international student programs aimed at improving the integrity and accountability of the program. Of particular interest is a change to the requirement to study provision aimed at preventing foreign nationals from remaining legally in Canada on a study permit if they have abandoned their studies. CIC has invited public comment on the proposed changes. Both the University of Manitoba and AUCC have shared concerns that the new rules cannot require excessive monitoring and reporting by institutions. Further details on the proposed changes are expected before the end of 2012.
R&D expenditures up

Gross domestic expenditures on research and development (R&D) are anticipated to amount to $30 billion in 2012, up 0.3% from 2011 according to the latest from Statistics Canada. While still below the $30.8 billion peak in 2008, the 2012 R&D intentions are 28% higher than the $23.5 billion spent in 2002, and according to Statistics Canada show a gradual recovery from the most recent economic downturn.

Of particular interest, the higher education sector's R&D spending intentions are $11.5 billion, making it the second largest R&D performing sector. Since 2002, R&D expenditures in this sector have increased almost 55%.

Business enterprises expect to spend $15.5 billion on R&D in 2012, up 0.9% from the previous year but 6.9% below the pre-recession peak. This anticipated expenditure accounts for 52% of total spending on R&D, down from 58% a decade earlier, illustrating this sector's reduced presence in R&D activities.

The federal government, the third largest performing sector, anticipates R&D spending at $2.5 billion, down 7.3% from 2011. This decline represents a return to more normal levels, as a result of the conclusion of federal stimulus spending. From 2002 to 2012, federal R&D expenditures on R&D increased 13.0%.

The remaining R&D performing sectors (provincial governments, provincial research organizations and private non-profit organizations) are expected to spend $547 million. This combined group's R&D expenditures are anticipated to increase 7.5% from 2011 and 58.6% from 2002.

For R&D funding, the business enterprise sector is expected to fund $14.1 billion in 2012, followed by the federal government sector at $5.8 billion and the higher education sector at $5.4 billion. The business enterprise sector and the higher education sector anticipate increases of 1.0% over 2011 R&D funding levels while the federal government sector anticipates a 3.1% decline. In comparison, provincial governments and provincial research organizations expect R&D funding to increase by 2.8% to $1.7 billion in 2012. Funding for R&D also includes the foreign sector, which is anticipated to provide $2.0 billion, up 1.8% from 2011.

Copyright Modernization Act proclaimed

Most of the provisions under Bill C-11, The Copyright Modernization Act, have come into force, including those relating to fair dealing and educational exceptions. According to AUCC the changes will facilitate online learning and make university education more accessible for all, especially Aboriginal Canadians and mature students.

AUCC Advocacy Day Video

The AUCC has released a video highlighting the purpose and success of the Advocacy Day on the Hill. The video also highlights the theme of that day, “putting ideas to work”, which focuses on the value of university-business partnerships.
Growing Forward 2 set

The federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) Ministers of Agriculture have reached an agreement on the content of the Growing Forward 2 policy framework for the agriculture, agri-food and agri-products sector. The new five-year agreement includes investments in strategic initiatives of over $3 billion for innovation, competitiveness and market development.

Following public consultations, governments have committed to increase their focus on innovation, competitiveness and market development to position Canadian farmers, producers and processors to capitalize on emerging market opportunities. Research and development hold the promise of growth in both productivity and profitability for the sector.

New R&D initiatives included in Growing Forward 2 include the consolidation of agri-environmental scientific functions and knowledge transfer activities, the expansion of the Agri-Science Clusters initiative, the extension of R&D and commercialization support under Agricultural Innovation Program and support for demonstration projects.

Federal NDP launch national science policy consultations

The federal NDP will be meeting with academics, entrepreneurs, students and government agencies from across Canada over the next year and a half to seek input into its new science policy. The NDP is seeking input on what is the major problem facing science in Canada, its cause and what can be done to fix it. The party released a 13-page discussion paper, Towards a National Science Policy, in early November. The paper is the first in a series that will formulate the party’s national strategy.
At the University of Manitoba we are passionate about advancing Indigenous education and research. Engage in a discussion with our accomplished panel about empowering the next generation of Indigenous leaders.

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Frederic Gaspard Theatre
Basic Medical Sciences Building, Bannatyne Campus
Reception in Joe Doupe Concourse - 6:30PM-7:00PM
Panel Discussion – 7:00PM-8:30PM

Our full season of topics and speakers is available [here](#).

RSVP for the event to: [Visionary_Conversations@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Visionary_Conversations@umanitoba.ca). You can also interact with the University of Manitoba on Twitter (#umvisionary) and Facebook.