February 3, 2017  

Ms. Julia Kim  
Chair, Board of Governors  
Simon Fraser University  
8888 University Dr  
Burnaby BC V5A 1S6  

Dear Ms. Kim:  

This Mandate Letter provides Government’s annual strategic priorities and sets out key performance expectations for the 2017/18 fiscal year for your institution.  

On behalf of the Province of British Columbia, thank you for your leadership and the contributions made by Simon Fraser University over the past year, including your support for the use of online resources and open textbooks, helping to save costs for students. We recognize the efforts made in supporting the strategic actions outlined in the 2016/17 Mandate Letter, which continue to be priorities this year.  

The BC Corporate Governance Framework takes a principles-based approach to providing direction for effective governance of ministries and public sector organizations. Since June 2014, the Taxpayer Accountability Principles (TAP) have provided guidance to ensure that the actions taken and services provided strengthen accountability and promote cost control, while meeting the public policy objectives established by Government on behalf of the citizens of BC.  

It is critical that institutions operate as efficiently as possible, in order to ensure that British Columbians are provided with effective services at the lowest cost possible. This requires constant focus on maintaining a cost conscious and principled culture through the efficient delivery of services that stand the test of public scrutiny and help to develop a prosperous economy in an environmentally sustainable manner. This is critical to Government’s commitment to control spending and balance the budget.  

Government is making open information a priority across the public sector to enhance transparency and accountability in the delivery of programs, public services and the use of public resources.
Government is responsible for providing funding, setting the legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks in which public post-secondary institutions operate along with establishing the institution’s mandate. This includes the following statutory provisions:

Section 47 (2) of the University Act:

A university must, so far as and to the full extent that its resources from time to time permit, do all of the following:

- establish and maintain colleges, schools, institutes, faculties, departments, chairs and courses of instruction;
- provide instruction in all branches of knowledge;
- establish facilities for the pursuit of original research in all branches of knowledge;
- establish fellowships, scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries, prizes, rewards and pecuniary and other aids to facilitate or encourage proficiency in the subjects taught in the university and original research in all branches of knowledge;
- provide a program of continuing education in all academic and cultural fields throughout British Columbia; and
- generally promote and carry on the work of a university in all its branches, through the cooperative effort of the board, senate and other constituent parts of the university.

Within the terms of the legislation, the Simon Fraser University will, in fulfilling its mandate, consider strategic priorities of Government when allocating institutional resources. The strategic priority actions of Government for 2017/18 are:

- Develop and implement an updated Skills Gap Plan, in alignment with priorities of the BC Skills for Jobs Blueprint;
- Continue to deepen BC’s talent pool, in support of the #BCTECH strategy, ensuring opportunities for students in the technology sector;
- Work in partnership with the Government and Aboriginal communities, organizations and institutes to implement the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan to increase the participation and success of Aboriginal learners;
- Continue to deliver on provincial priorities for international education, including pursuing opportunities to advance the two-way flow of students, educators and ideas;
- Continue to actively encourage and promote the development and use of online resources and open textbooks to support post-secondary affordability for students;
- Continue to actively participate in the development and implementation of a common application system for all public post-secondary institutions in the province;
- Promote safe campuses by developing policies and actions to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct and assault of all forms;
- Meet or exceed the financial targets identified in the Ministry’s three-year Service Plan as tabled under Budget 2017, including maintaining balanced or surplus financial results; and
- Continue to maximize the efficient use of public post-secondary administrative resources through participation in the Administrative Service Delivery Transformation initiative.
Principled public sector governance remains a priority for Government. Public post-secondary institutions are expected to undertake comprehensive professional development to enhance orientation of their board members and senior executives. Government will be providing programs and resources designed to assist with orientation and to ensure understanding of the accountabilities and expectations of public sector boards and organizations. For detailed information about TAP directives, please refer to the following link, Taxpayer Accountability Principles.

Government is committed to continue to strengthen the relationship between Government and public post-secondary institutions. This strong focus on increased two-way communication supports and ensures a mutual understanding and appreciation for institutional priorities.

In addition, it is expected that your institution will continue to be diligent in ensuring familiarity with and adherence to statutory obligations and policies that have broad application across the public sector. Please refer to the following link for a summary of these accountabilities: Public Service Organization Accountabilities.

As public post-secondary institutions that receive funding from the Government, institutions are expected to conduct their affairs in a manner consistent with the legislative, regulatory and policy framework established by Government and share in upholding TAP. This includes:

1. Adhering to the policy, guidelines and directions of the Public Sector Employers’ Council regarding executive compensation and the management freeze (so long as the freeze remains in place).

2. Negotiating settlements with unionized employee groups consistent with the Economic Stability Mandate for all collective agreements that expire on or after December 31, 2013.

3. Ensuring that institutional operational and financial activities, including procurement and travel, are conducted consistent with Government standards for cost-consciousness and the most cost-effective use of taxpayer resources.

4. Conducting board matters in accordance with the Orientation for B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institution Board Members guidelines.

5. Helping to achieve goals identified by B.C.’s Climate Leadership Plan.


The Ministry has posted the annual reporting requirements for public post-secondary institutions on its website. This document outlines the statistical, financial and performance reports for the fiscal year. The Institution agrees to meet these requirements by providing the reports and high quality data necessary for Government to carry out its responsibilities.
Public post-secondary institutions are required to identify major capital projects, including information technology projects, through quarterly reporting to the Ministry. This includes capital and information technology projects with a total cost greater than $50 million, regardless of funding source.

Each board member acknowledges this Mandate Letter by signing the attachment to this letter. The Mandate letter is to be posted publicly on your institution’s website and a copy signed by all Board members provided to the Ministry and made available upon request.

I look forward to our regular meetings focusing on strategic priorities, performance against TAP, and working together to protect the public interest at all times.

Sincerely,

Andrew Wilkinson
Minister

Attachments: Signature page template
Taxpayer Accountability Principles

pc: Honourable Christy Clark
Premier

Ms. Kim Henderson
Deputy Minister to the Premier and Cabinet Secretary

Ms. Athana Mentzelopoulos
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Finance

Ms. Sandra Carroll
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Advanced Education

Ms. Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland
Associate Deputy Minister
Ministry of Finance
As members of the Simon Fraser University Board of Governors, we individually and collectively acknowledge our statutory obligations to act in the best interests of Simon Fraser University and affirm as Board members to take into account the Taxpayer Accountability Principles in exercising our duty.

Tyler Carlson  
Elected Student Member

Ranjodh Gill  
Elected Student Member

Anke Kessler  
Elected Faculty Member

Jo Hinchliffe  
Elected Non-Faculty Member

Michael Cordoba  
Government Appointed Member (Alumni)

Jillian Earthy  
Government Appointed Member

Christopher W. Lewis  
Government Appointed Member

Patty P. Sahota  
Government Appointed Member

James Brockwell Stewart  
Government Appointed Member

Anne E. Giardini, O.C., Q.C.  
Chancellor

Andrew Petter, Q.C.  
President and Vice-Chancellor

Fiona Robin  
Deputy Board Chair  
Board of Governors  
Government Appointed Member

Julia H. Kim  
Chair, Board of Governors  
Government Appointed Member

Date Signed

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<td><strong>Cost Consciousness (Efficiency)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Accountability</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Appropriate Compensation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Service</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Respect</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Integrity</strong></td>
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