BC’s Research Universities

Presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

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A few highlights from RRU

• Reputation for life changing experience (student and alumni feedback)
  – National Survey of Student Engagement results (*Maclean’s*)
  – Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey

• Pioneers in cost-effective, on-line blended learning, with a unique, comprehensive, fully integrated teaching and learning model

• Operate fully under our unique business model approach to decision making – 95% cost-revenue ratio

• RRU meets or exceeds financial health ratios set by Government

• Growth of 22% in FTE’s over the last three years
A few highlights from UVic

• Comprehensive research intensive university, ranked among the best in the world

• Exceeding government funded student capacity with high quality programs (BC Outcomes Survey 94% good or very good)

• A leader in experiential learning with almost 3,000 co-op placements a year and strong student outcomes

• Increased our Indigenous student population from under 100 students in 2000 to over 900 today

• Attracting over $120 million annually in research funding
  • Clean energy (ranked fifth internationally for research impact)
  • Oceans (world leading ocean observing system – VENUS and NEPTUNE
  • Community engaged research (health, aging, addictions)

• $3.2 billion in provincial economic impact
Facing today’s realities together

• We share a common objective of ensuring that British Columbians have the knowledge, skills and training for today’s workforce and tomorrow’s opportunities
  – 93% of university graduates are employed or have a job lined up
  – 95% of them work in positions commensurate with their education
  – By 2020, 18,800 jobs in BC will require a university education

• We recognize the importance of delivering the best programs and services to students within the context of today’s financial pressures
Research universities have a unique and essential role in British Columbia

- We match skills to jobs, offering a diversity of programs from nursing to business and engineering and many others.

- Through research and experiential learning we nurture innovative thinkers with the ability to transform and adapt:
  - To new technologies
  - Under conditions of change and uncertainty
  - To a fast-changing marketplace and global environment

- Our graduates in all disciplines are developing employable skills coupled with key competencies, such as critical thinking, communication and working well with others, so they are employable – not in just today’s workplace but also in tomorrow’s labour market.
Cost pressures

• We recognize the current financial realities and have been responding:
  – Program and service cuts
  – “Shared Services”, incl. joint competitive procurement
  – Diversifying revenue:
    • philanthropy
    • partnerships with private sector

• Government operating grant has been flat since 2010/11 with decreases planned for the coming three years

• And at same time, cost pressures are growing:
  – Wage settlements (current and expected)
  – Inflation
  – Reduced funding for infrastructure repair and renewal
  – Carbon tax offsets
The future

• Universities are essential to BC’s success – educating our workforce and fuelling innovation through research

• Universities are needed for our future – they are key to driving our productivity, fostering healthy communities and enabling us to adapt to global changes

• We recognize the current financial pressures and have been responding – but further cuts to our operating budgets will affect our ability to deliver quality programs to BC students