

DATE: August 9, 2023

TO: President's Leadership Council (to share with faculty and staff)

CC: Members of the Senate Committee on Academic Health Programming

FROM: Helga Hallgrímsdóttir, Deputy Provost & Chair, Senate Committee on Academic Health Programming

RE: Update from the Senate Committee on Academic Health Programming

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to update you on the early activities of the Senate Committee on Academic Health Programming and provide an overview of intended next steps for the Committee over the rest of the summer and the fall.

As outlined on the [project page](#), Senate has delegated to the Committee the task of exploring new structures for housing health programming at the University of Victoria. The Committee takes as its starting point the consultations and recommendations of the [UVic Health Initiative](#), which aims to enhance the quality and raise the profile of health and wellness research, programs and related activities at UVic. As well, in keeping with core university principles, we have a responsibility to recognize and respond to the evolving health care needs of our times, including as outlined in UNDRIP, DRIPA and the TRC Calls to Action. Without predetermining the results of the work, the Committee recognizes that one possible outcome will be a new faculty structure to house existing health programs and enhance opportunities for future health programming.

The Committee first met on June 28 to discuss project plans and timelines. An initial step for us as we engage the campus community is to collect thoughts and ideas about what a health-related faculty could look like. A working group (constituted by Vanessa Andreotti, Tony Eder, Lindsay Gagel, Nathan Lachowsky, Lynne Marks and Ashley Fitterer) is designing a survey to circulate to current students, staff, faculty and librarians in September. The survey will collect confidential feedback for the Committee on the focus of a health-related faculty, opportunities and risks, and potential component units, as well as on partnerships, collaboration, interdisciplinarity and organization. We will notify you when the survey is live and encourage your participation in this important consultation piece.

The Committee will rely on the survey results to determine next steps in this process including future consultation opportunities. We will keep our community updated as this work progresses.

We aim to bring to Senate, for discussion, a preliminary and high-level mandate and overall focus of a new structure for health programming in December 2023, and a recommendation for a decision on its foundational units and programs—drawn from existing health-related units and programs—in January or February 2024. Following Senate's deliberations and decision, the Committee will work on the more complex elements of the project, including conversations on how and through what process programs and units might relocate to a new structure. The Committee will develop a separate project plan and process at this stage, as well as recommend [parallel processes](#) that are outside of Senate's purview, including supports and processes for individuals who may be impacted.

Thank you in advance for your interest and engagement in this project. Stay tuned for the release of our community survey and other engagement opportunities announced in the fall term.

