(A) Continuing projects and initiatives:

Before outlining the projects envisioned for the academic year we are about to begin, there are several projects, initiatives and issues that were identified last year at this time that remain in process for 2007-2008. In some cases, much of the work is now completed. In other cases, we are still in relatively early stages of implementation. The list, in general, looks similar to the information presented at last year’s Heads Retreat. In rough form, and in no order of importance, some projects and initiatives that have engaged us in Arts include the following.

1. Perhaps the most important and time-consuming process in our Faculty in 2006-2007 was the **overhaul of the Faculty of Arts Teaching Guidelines**, the first steps of which occurred in 2006. These guidelines were examined by Departments, and subsequently by the Heads Committee. The early part of 2007 was devoted to further study and review, including by Executive Council and Faculty Council. In the end, there will be new Guidelines adopted in 2007-2008, with full implementation to begin with workload allocation in the Fall of 2007 for courses to be taught in the 2008-09 academic year.

2. Response to the **Equity Employment Systems Review**. The report of the Faculty’s Employment Systems Review committee was made available at the end of 2006. The Committee did a very thorough job, and I prepared a response and action plan in order to address the recommendations of the Committee. This response was circulated at a special Faculty Council in May, 2007, and the first aspects of policy implementation are now underway.

3. **Evaluation of language teaching**. The Faculty has several small language and literature departments. Having initiated a process to review what we do and to report on the directions that might be pursued, I established a working committee chaired by Dr. Bill Lee, Director of the Asian Studies Centre. This committee will report in Fall 2007, with any recommendations requiring action to be dealt with in the 2007-2008 academic year.

4. **Evaluation of interdisciplinary initiatives**. Like the language departments, interdisciplinary units are often small and face pressures of various kinds. At the same time, one of our strengths in the Faculty of Arts is the scope of our interdisciplinary research and teaching. An ad hoc committee has been proposed but not yet struck to look into ways to facilitate interdisciplinary teaching and research, as well as to investigate possible new structures of organization for interdisciplinary units in the Faculty. Progress on this file has been slow, as developments in other areas seem to take priority.
5. **Development of a new role for University College.** The past year was marked by extensive discussions with members of the University College community on developing a new direction for the College. These discussions will be brought to a close with a proposal for the College’s future, to be presented by mid-October 2007 at a special University College Council. The timeline for this proposal is now almost a full year later than the initial target date, for which I take full responsibility. The current academic year should, however, see considerable movement on this front.

6. A full proposal for a **Native Studies PhD program** has been developed, the proposal is now working its way through the COPSE and Senate process for approval.

7. The **expansion of internationalization efforts** in the Faculty was a priority for 2006-2007 and it remains the case for 2007-2008. So far we have worked to expand opportunities for student exchanges, exploring new potential agreements in Turkey, Japan, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Argentina. As well, we are expanding study abroad or field school opportunities, led by an exciting new field school in Iceland launched in June 2007. The Faculty awarded its first Dean of Arts Student Exchange Travel Awards to students traveling abroad. I am working on a proposal for a designation of those students who have completed a certain amount of credits, including language courses, and perhaps a term abroad, as “International Scholars”. This initiative will be considered in 2007-2008.

8. A **review of the Psychological Service Centre (PSC)** was postponed as there was an accreditation review of the Clinical Psychology program. On the basis of this review, as well as other information, the PSC will conduct a self-study lead by newly-appointed Acting Co-Director (Planning), Dr. John Arnett (Clinical Health Psychology).

9. The **tenure and promotion guidelines** in the Faculty of Arts will need to be revisited, especially in light of the fact that we have not been using a faculty nucleus committee, as specified in the Collective Agreement. First, a nucleus committee will be appointed. Second, the rules and criteria will be reviewed, starting in Fall 2007.

10. Finally, **the committee system in the Faculty** was reviewed in 2006-2007 and final approval for the changes went to Faculty Council. The Faculty eliminated several committees that did not meet on a regular basis, often for many years at a time, though they remained on the books. At the same time, it reinvigorated some committees that the Faculty feels should be active and able to play a constructive role in Faculty business.

(B) **New projects and initiatives:**

In addition to these items carried over from 2006-2007, the Faculty will embark on several new projects and initiatives for 2007-2008. Again in no order of priority, these include:
1. The formal establishment of the Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies. This Centre, physically situated in the newly renovated wing of the Isbister Building, will be formally established in Fall 2007 with funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Manitoba government, and the University of Manitoba. The Strategic Research Plan for the University sets out this statement: “Through a number of its humanities and social sciences departments, the University has a long-standing interest and research strength in globalization and cultural studies. Newly developed educational program and research initiatives in this area, combined with the recent hiring of a number of promising young faculty, have led the University to identify globalization and cultural studies as a priority area for further development.” The Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies will provide a focus for integrating and expanding this research. Dr. Diana Brydon, a Tier I Canada Research Chair recruited to our campus in 2006, will serve as founding Director.

2. The establishment of the Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Tradition. This Centre, to be located in University College adjacent to the Department of English Multi-Media Lab, will be intended to promote Creative Writing, as well as the study of narratives and community. The Centre will be led by founding Director, Dr. Warren Cariou (English). A steering committee has been established, with the goal of moving forward with a formal establishment of the Centre as soon as possible. In the meantime, the Centre will begin some operations this academic year, including the appointment of a Story-Teller in Residence. Operating funds have been secured through the University’s budget process. Some funds for renovation of space in University College Room 391 have been allocated internally from the Indirect Costs of Research grant, and the balance is sought externally from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI). The establishment of this Centre will serve the vital function of retaining excellent faculty members in the area.

3. Along with the creation of this Centre, the Faculty of Arts has nominated Dr. Warren Cariou (English) for a Tier II Canada Research Chair in Oral Culture, Literature and Creative Writing.

4. The Faculty of Arts has been awarded its first NSERC Canada Research Chair, a Tier II Chair to be held in the field of brain and cognitive science. The Department of Psychology will begin a search immediately.

5. The establishment of the position of Distinguished Filmmaker-in-Residence. This ambitious plan involved attracting to our campus, and to our Film Studies program and Icelandic Department, a renowned artist and filmmaker, Guy Maddin. Cosponsored by the Department of English and the Department of Icelandic, this Filmmaker-in-Residence appointment will allow our students to benefit from the personal attention of one of the world’s most innovative film artists.

6. The Faculty of Arts has received a major donation and has established an endowment fund intended to full fund a named Chair in the Modern History of the Middle East and North Africa. The proposal will go before Senate shortly.
7. In 2007-2008 the Faculty will mobilize a working group to investigate the possibility of implementing an **African Studies program** at the University of Manitoba. We have several faculty in different fields who have expertise in this area, including a recently appointed African History specialist. At this stage, it may well be desirable to establish an interdisciplinary minor program in this area.

8. In a similar vein, the Faculty will be pursuing the possibilities for the establishment of a **Jewish Studies program**. The Faculty of Arts still has on the books a program in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, which has been in abeyance for years due to lack of courses necessary to mount such a program. In 2006-2007, I began meeting with some prominent members of the Jewish community in Winnipeg to discuss the various possibilities open to us in this regard, including a desired goal of an endowed Chair in Jewish Studies. Such a Chair could provide the anchor for a new (or newly revived) program in our Faculty. In 2007-2008, an exploratory committee will be struck for the purpose of investigating the likely student demand and level of community interest.

9. Again in a related vein, I believe that the Middle East and its people require more attention and scholarly study in the modern world. That is partly why, in 2007-2008, I would like to see the Faculty investigate the possibility of teaching **language courses in Arabic**. Across North America there is a huge and increasing demand for instruction in the Arabic language. Unfortunately, we do not teach any Arabic at the University of Manitoba at this time. Perhaps as part of a revamped Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Program, or a new Jewish Studies or African Studies program, or perhaps on its own, Arabic could be a great addition to our roster of language programs.

10. Another new program area which we in Arts will pursue, in conjunction with partners in the Faculty of Extended Education, will be the possibility of creating an **Integrated Studies program that would lead to a Bachelor’s Degree**. Such a program would be uniquely designed to accommodate the working lives of mid-career adults who have the goal of completing a university degree.

11. The implementation of the Aurora Student information system has had a profound impact on the Arts student advisors. One way or another, we need to **ensure that we have adequate staff to process the student records**, provide the necessary assessments, and verify the required data. This will most likely involve an increase in staff in the front office.

12. Given the current budget constraints, as well as the need to ensure that current spending is meeting necessary needs, there will be a **global review of the Arts budget**. This review will include our so-called “special units” that receive funding from the Dean’s Office, as well as a unit-by-unit assessment of current budget allocations.
13. The Faculty of Arts is considering the creation of a new support position, in partnership with the University’s Research Office, of a **Research Facilitator or Research Officer**. This new position would provide support and service to all Arts researchers, including grant-writing and then grant management. As well, the new Research Facilitator/Officer will aid in the processes of knowledge translation and exchange, improving the relationship between Arts researchers and various public and private decision-makers.

14. Working with the Alumni Association, I plan in 2007-2008 to explore **new and innovative ways to help Arts Alumni to remain connected with the University community**. Compared to some Faculties, such as Engineering or Social Work, we do not have a tradition of well-defined cohorts going through their programs together and then remaining connected to their fellow alumni through interaction within the same profession. However, we do have students with strong links to their home departments. Thus, we would like to pilot in 2007-2008 some department-specific Alumni events in conjunction with the University’s Homecoming and our own Arts Celebrating Arts events. This and other opportunities to capitalize on our strong alumni will be explored by a new Dean’s Advisory Committee on Alumni Affairs to be established in 2007-2008.

15. In addition to expanding its Alumni affairs, the Faculty of Arts needs to clarify its funding priorities and promote more effectively the giving opportunities for its Alumni and friends.

16. As academic administrators predicted, enrollment in the Faculty of Arts has begun to fall off from the highs of the past few years. This is part of a trend which is expected to continue. As a result, I believe that the Faculty of Arts, as the largest provider of undergraduate teaching at our University, needs to **become more active in student recruitment**. As a result, I plan to initiate a Dean’s Advisory Committee on Student Recruitment, to begin work in the Fall 2007. The goal will be to review our efforts in recruitment, liaise with the University’s office of student recruitment, and make recommendations on way that the Faculty can better utilize available resources for recruitment.

Submitted by Richard Sigurdson, Dean, Faculty of Arts