

THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY  
PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING  
MEETING OF DECEMBER 1, 2006

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Council for Open Learning, held in the Boardroom of the Thompson Rivers University Open Learning Division, Burnaby, B.C., commencing at 11:30 a.m.

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ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
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<b>Planning Council Present:</b>	M. Evered, Chair J. Murray C. James D. Noakes M. Young J. Keller B. Daly I. Rich-McQuay (Teleconference) D. Loblaw (Teleconference) J. LaBrie L. Jacques (Teleconference) A. Tucker J. Gaskell D. McBain	<b>Planning Council Absent:</b> L. Krohn D. Stanley
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**Executive and Others Present:** John Sparks, Associate Vice-President, Legal Affairs  
Louis Giguere  
Gordon Down (teleconference)  
D. Sproull, Recording Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER**

M. Evered in the Chair.

The meeting being duly constituted for the conduct of business, the Chair called the meeting to order at 11:35 am.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Jim Gaskell, Associate Dean External Programs and Learning Technologies of the University of British Columbia; Darlene McBain, Alumni Member from Thompson Rivers University; and Judith Murray, Vice-President Open Learning Division of Thompson Rivers University.

In accordance with the proposed bylaws, members of the Planning Council agreed to hear presentations by Gordon Down and Louis Giguere on specific matters at the meeting.

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### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the agenda as amended to include Election for the Vice-Chair of the Planning Council and Replacement Credentials.*

### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2006 meeting as circulated.*

### **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

#### **Election for the Vice-Chair of the Planning Council for Open Learning**

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint J. Murray as the Vice-Chair of the Planning Council for Open Learning.*

The Chair noted that C. James will continue to serve as a member of the Planning Council by filling one of the other vacant positions.

#### **Enrolment Data**

As requested at the previous meeting, enrolment data was circulated for information. The Chair asked that members forward questions about the data provided directly to C. James. New recruitment strategies were discussed, including the development of partnerships with industry, business and other post-secondary institutions.

#### **Adoption of the Planning Council for Open Learning Bylaws**

At the request of the Chair, J. Sparks discussed the proposed bylaws and reminded the Planning Council that the proposed bylaws have been modelled after the Senate Bylaws and that the language dealing with conflict of interest is derived from the Board Resource and Development Office in Victoria. J. Sparks invited members of the Planning Council to comment on the proposed bylaws.

Discussion ensued and the following amendments were supported:

- The number of meetings held per year change from quarterly to bi-annual with the provision for additional meetings if required. The meeting dates are to be announced 12 months in advance.

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- To include opportunity for resolution on matters by electronic means (email adoption similar to that of the TRU Board of Governors).

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to serve notice of motion on the Planning Council for Open Learning Bylaws with the amendments discussed at the meeting.* **D. Sproull**

### **Geoff Peters Report**

The report was circulated at the meeting for information.

### **Open Learning Designation**

A memo dated May 5, 2006 from Cyndi McLeod, Associate Vice-President of TRU World was circulated which raised concern that the open learning designation on transcripts and credentials may have a negative impact on some of the international partnerships. This matter was discussed at the August 28, 2006 Senate meeting which resulted in the resolution to remove the open learning designation on all credentials that are unique to the Open Learning Division with the exception of the Bachelor of Technology (Computing) and Bachelor of Arts.

Discussion ensued on whether there should be any differentiation between credentials based on the delivery mechanism.

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to request that Senate work towards the elimination of special designations and focus on the outcome of the degrees.* **M. Evered**

An excerpt from the minutes of the October 23, 2006 Senate meeting was circulated for information which permits TRU to grant replacement credentials to former graduates of BCOU and BCOC.

### **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

#### **Provost & Vice-President, Academic's Report**

M. Evered reported that Senate is currently developing a new academic decision-making process and that Planning Council will be informed of its progress.

He also reported that TRU is developing a strategic planning document through a process that began in February 2006, by inviting the TRU community to advise on areas of

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importance, values, goals and areas that need change. The responses were compiled and made into the draft document circulated at the meeting. The document lists the following 6 goals of the University:

1. The University of Choice for Student Engagement
2. The University of Choice for the Integration of Research and Scholarship with Teaching and Learning
3. The University of Choice for Aboriginal Students and First Nations
4. The University of Choice for Open Learning
5. The University of Choice for International Opportunities
6. The University of Choice for Career Success

Members were asked to review the document and invited to share their thoughts and comments by emailing [mevered@tru.ca](mailto:mevered@tru.ca) or [dsproull@tru.ca](mailto:dsproull@tru.ca) by Friday, December 8, 2006.

### **Vice-President, Open Learning's Report**

J. Murray reported that she has spent the past three months meeting with many people to hear their views in consideration of implementing a vision/plan for the Open Learning Division.

She indicated that the notion of program integration has been considered and that this is possible in some areas but others need separation due to the different learner needs and the flexibility that is required.

J. Murray explained that when delivery is offered outside of the traditional methods, the institution is questioned for being different and therefore, has to prove its quality and must provide a high level of customer service. The Open Learning Division is looking ahead to the future with the expectation for growth in the area of open and distance learning by developing the markets in B.C. and beyond. There is also a lot of interest for collaboration with other institutions.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Open Learning Medal Criteria**

Gordon Down, Manager Financial Aid & Awards, addressed a concern with the policy on Academic Achievement (ED 9-1), in that it automatically eliminates open learning students based on the requirement that consideration will only be given to students who take a minimum of 80% average of a full program load in 4 semesters during the

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assessment period.

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to report to Senate that the criteria for the TRU medals preclude many open learning students and to recommend that those barriers be removed.* **M. Evered**

The Chair thanked Gordon Down for participating at the meeting.

### **Residency Requirements**

Louis Giguere, Academic Director Arts & Science, described recent concerns about the residency requirement associated with a partnership with the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technologies. Georgian College and Mohawk College have asked Thompson Rivers University to consider developing an articulation agreement that requires a minimum of 15 university credits.

It was noted that when Thompson Rivers University acquired BCOU, the 6 credit residency requirement for open learning was maintained and that the basic rules for outside affiliation agreements will need to be developed. It was agreed that the matter of residency requirement will need further discussion at future meetings and that the current request be dealt with as a specific partnership rather than as an overall policy.

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the degree requirement of a minimum of 15 university credits for the TRU-OL articulation agreements with Georgian College and Mohawk College.*

The Chair thanked Louis Giguere for participating at the meeting.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

At the request of J. Labrie, the article entitled, *Genesis of the Open Learning Institute of British Columbia* by Louise Moran was circulated for information. The Chair welcomed members to share relevant correspondence with the Planning Council.

The policy entitled, *Thompson Rivers University Policy Development and Approval* was circulated for information. J. Sparks explained that this provides the framework for developing policies and that the Planning Council has authority to create policy. It was indicated that in the future, the Open Learning policies will be integrated with the Thompson Rivers University policies.

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**CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chair thanked the members for their commitment to the Planning Council for Open Learning.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

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Planning Council Chair

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Planning Council Vice-Chair