

THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY
PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 4, 2008

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Council for Open Learning, held in OL 127, BC Centre for Open Learning, Kamloops, B.C.

ITEM	DISCUSSION		ACTION
Planning Council Present:	M. Evered, Chair (TRU) J. Murray, Vice-Chair (TRU) G. Tarzwell (TRU) C. Beddome (TRU) I. Rich-McQuay (TRU) D. Loblaw (TRU) (Teleconference) D. Stanley (TRU) (Teleconference) C. Golding (BCIT) M. Lamberson (UBC) L. Jacques (CNC)	Planning Council Absent:	J. Keller (TRU)
Executive and Others Present:	J. Sparks, Associate Vice President, Legal Affairs, TRU S. Jackson, Executive Assistant, Office of Vice-President, TRU-Open Learning A. Tucker, TRU		

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 10:09 a.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the agenda as presented.*

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the meeting of June 4, 2008 as circulated.* **S.Jackson**

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NOTICES OF MOTION

Residency requirements – J. Murray

At the Planning Council for Open Learning meeting on June 4th, 2008 the following options were presented:

Option A1: Status quo. Residency remains at 6 TRU credits. Any program requesting a different residency would require approval from PCOL.

Option A2: Residency requirements vary by credential level. Degree programs would require a residency of 15 TRU credits; diploma programs would require a residency of 9 TRU credits and certificate programs would require a residency of 6 TRU credits.

Option A3: Residency requirements vary by credential level and by credit source. Degree programs would require a residency of 15 credits from a BC institution, 6 of which must be TRU credits. Diploma programs would require a residency of 9 credits, 6 of which must be TRU credits. Certificate programs would require a residency of 6 TRU credits.

A friendly amendment was made to Option 2 to allow lower or higher residency requirements to be accommodated.

Notice of Motion was served on 4 June, 2008 as follows:

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to serve notice of motion to adopt Option A2: Residency requirements vary by credential level. Degree programs would require a residency of 15 TRU credits; diploma programs would require a residency of 9 TRU credits and certificate programs would require a residency of 6 TRU credits. Any program requesting a different residency would require the permission of the Planning Council for Open Learning.

No comments were received in response to the Notice of Motion.

M. Evered explained that this proposal, if adopted, would be “grandfathered” in and would only apply to new students. It was agreed that the proposal would come into effect on January 2, 2009.

C. Beddome explained that the main issue is in aggregating all credits from multiple institutions towards a credential. Since TRU removed the Open Learning designation from credentials, the Faculty of Arts has struggled with granting Arts degrees with only 6 TRU

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credits and that was the impetus to review the residency requirements for Open Learning credentials.

D. Stanley spoke against the motion, saying that the Open Learning philosophy has always been “open”, that OL students could aggregate their credits from multiple institutions, and Open Learning was known as the place to go to get that. However, it was recognized that the quality of external courses was an issue.

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to adopt Option A2: Residency requirements vary by credential level. Degree programs would require a residency of 15 TRU credits; diploma programs would require a residency of 9 TRU credits and certificate programs would require a residency of 6 TRU credits. Any program requesting a different residency would require the permission of the Planning Council for Open Learning.

**M. Evered/
J. Murray**

The motion was passed.

At the meeting on June 4th, the type of credit that can be used to meet Open Learning Residency requirements was discussed, and the following options were presented:

- Option B1: TRU course credits only to count towards residency
- Option B2: TRU course credits and/or PLAR to count towards residency

Notice of Motion was served on 4 June, 2008 as follows:

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to serve notice of motion to adopt Option B1: TRU course credits only.

Currently, all TRU credits count towards residency, whether they are TRU course credits, PLAR credits or Consortium credits. M. Evered explained that this proposal, if adopted, would be “grandfathered” in and would only apply to new students.

Discussion centred around what kind of credits should count towards residency. If PLAR is undertaken at another institution, then those credits would be transfer credits which would count towards the credential but not towards residency. In theory, our credentials can be awarded to students who have taken all their courses through the Consortium or PLAR.

It was moved and seconded to adopt Option B1: TRU course credits only.

The motion was defeated.

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M. Lamberson suggested that the Planning Council would entertain an alternative motion, separating out the different issues, at a future meeting. M. Evered suggested a report be prepared for the next Planning Council meeting stating how the transition would be managed and how the interests of the students would be protected.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Provost and Vice-President, Academic

M. Evered reported that TRU had appointed a new President, effective 1 September 2008. Dr. Kathleen Scherf is the former Dean of the Faculty of Communication and Culture at the University of Calgary. As one of the most senior Deans at the University of Calgary, Dr. Scherf served as Chair of Deans' Council and as the Deans' representative on the University Budget Committee and the University Planning Committee, as well as taking a number of other significant, pan-institutional leadership roles.

M. Evered also reported that, since the last PCOL meeting, TRU has been developing an implementation plan for the TRU Strategic Plan. The implementation plan will be presented to PCOL, Senate and the Board of Governors.

Vice-President, Open Learning

J. Murray reported that Craig Jones received the TRU Distinguished Open Learning Alumni Award. This award recognizes his professional achievement as well as public service through the practice of law and his recognition of the Charter of Rights. Jones graduated from TRU in 1995 with a Bachelor of General Studies. He went on to enter law school at the University of British Columbia, his stepping stone to a Masters in Law at Harvard. Currently, Jones is the Supervising Counsel of the Constitutional and Administrative Law Group of the Ministry of the Attorney General in Victoria.

J. Murray gave an overview of TRU-OL's student demographic, recent marketing campaigns, current enrolments, and priorities for 2008/09. Priorities include providing excellent service for learners, and quality programs and courses. One of the most pressing challenges is TRU-OL's outdated courseware. TRU-OL is looking at re-engineering the course development model; the current development/delivery model is becoming unsustainable.

J. Murray reported on the Consortium for Open Learning. Royal Roads now has representation on the Consortium. The Consortium is moving forward on a number of

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issues. BC Campus is participating on a number of projects, which was seen as very positive.

J. Murray reported TRU-OL has made no progress on issues with the Ministry of Advanced Education since the last Planning Council meeting. The Ministry came to tour the BC Centre for Open Learning, and they were given an overview of TRU-OL but a reduction in the FTE target has not been forthcoming. L. Jacques suggested we should encourage the Ministry of Advanced Education to ask TRU-OL what our capacity is.

OPEN LEARNING PROGRAMS

G. Tarzwell presented a report detailing a program change and a course closure.

Program Change:

Social Service Worker Certificate Program

- It is proposed to change the entrance requirements (prerequisites), from PSYC 102 Introduction to Psychology (3 credits) to SSWP 200 Introduction to Social Work Practice (3 credits).
- Currently the entrance requirements include ENGL 106 Written Communication or equivalent. Students who have completed Grade 12 English with a B average may in future complete the voluntary English Language and Writing Assessment or the Language Proficiency Index and are exempt from ENGL 106 if they obtain a writing level score of 5 or 6.

D. Stanley requested that the proposed change be reviewed by a senior tutor, and requested the item be tabled until this is done.

It was moved and seconded to table the motion.

The motion was defeated.

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to recommend approval of the revised program entrance requirements for the social service worker certificate program to the Board of Governors.

**G. Tarzwell
/ M. Evered**

Course closure:

BISC 260 Community and Ecosystem Ecology

This course has been suspended, as textbooks for the course are no longer available. Open Learning is exploring the option of getting used books, but the condition of used

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books is an issue. Copyright costs are an issue if we try to copy books. Enrolment in this course has been declining.

It was requested that an overview of the approval process be given at the next meeting.

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to recommend the closure of BISC 260 to the Board of Governors.

**G. Tarzwell
/ M. Evered**

ACADEMIC PLAN

The Academic Plan was circulated for review, and J. Murray explained that this is a “semi-confidential” conceptual document approved by Senate. Discussion will take place on the Academic Plan at the next meeting.

NEW DEVELOPMENT/DELIVERY MODEL

J. Murray explained that TRU is currently in discussions with tutors and Union representatives regarding a new development/delivery model. The course development model that we currently have is not sustainable, given the number of courses we have now, and current resources. TRU-OL wants to move towards a sustainable model that allows tutors who are responsible for educational delivery to take on the maintenance of those courses to keep them current. It is TRU-OL’s goal to provide more and better learning opportunities to students and this will assist with that goal.

TUTOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

G. Tarzwell explained that the new tutor award will build onto the existing awards process for staff and faculty. Four nominators are needed, including three students, and evidence is required in support of the nomination. In line with the face-to-face Teaching Excellence Award, nominations must include a 500-word statement prepared by the tutor being nominated describing the tutor’s philosophy for helping students be successful. The award will be adjudicated by a selection committee, which will contain two OL students, one Senate member, the VP Open Learning, and winners from each of the three previous years (with no more than two winners from any program area). For the first year, it is proposed to invite tutors who have won the TRU-OL quarterly tutor award, as there will not be any previous winners. Winners will receive \$1500 towards the cost of a professional development activity, such as participation at a conference or the purchase of scholarly materials.

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Two amendments were suggested:

- Pedagogy and Advancement section of Criteria: change (theirs and the scholarly work of others) to (theirs and/or the scholarly work of others).
- Add a statement, "Nominees cannot nominate themselves."

On motion duly made it was RESOLVED to create an Open Learning Tutor Excellence Award, taking into account the two recommendations above.

**G. Tarzwell
/ M. Evered**

CLOSING REMARKS

M. Evered thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

D. Loblaw expressed frustration at the telephone system used for the meeting, and also requested that supporting documents be circulated well in advance of the meeting time.

The Planning Council will meet in May 2009; date to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Planning Council Chair

Planning Council Vice-Chair