

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING

Wednesday June 8, 2011

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
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PLANNING COUNCIL PRESENT:

J. Murray, Vice-Chair (TRU)
D. Stanley (Teleconference)
D. Loblaw (Videoconference)
M. Lamberson (UBC) (Videoconference)
C. Golding (BCIT)
K. Denton (Douglas) (Teleconference)
M. MacDonald (UVic) (Teleconference)
G. Tarzwell (TRU)
P. Campbell (TRU) (Teleconference)
M. Young (TRU)
W. Koczka (TRU)

PLANNING COUNCIL ABSENT:

U. Scheck, Chair (TRU)
C. Axworthy (TRU)
L. Doan (TRU)
I. Rich (TRU)
A. Ned (TRU)
C. Beddome (TRU)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHERS PRESENT:

S. Jackson, Notetaker, Office of the Vice President, Open Learning, TRU.

CALL TO ORDER

J. Murray in the Chair. The meeting being duly constituted for the conduct of business, the Chair called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Academic Plan was moved up to the start of the Agenda. On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to approve the agenda as amended.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to approve the minutes from the meeting of 10 November, 2010 as circulated.

S. Jackson

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

The minutes from the last meeting indicated that Gary Bunney would return to PCOL to give an update on the TRU Program Review process, at this meeting. Gary will be happy to return in November 2011 to do this.

S. Jackson

NEW BUSINESS

ACADEMIC PLAN UPDATE – K. SUTHERLAND

Kate Sutherland, Senior Advisor to the Provost, led a discussion on the Academic Plan which included the following highlights:

- TRU has been engaged in the academic planning process for approximately a year, consulting with high school students, local families, community groups, looking at NSSE results, etc. Feedback has also been invited from the Faculty Councils as well as various groups not captured in the faculty plan, e.g. the Library staff. The steering committee is looking for pan university themes (four have been identified so far).
- The steering committee will put everything into single document that will be distributed to faculty in October, and to Senate in December.
- A student services group is looking at a broad range of student services and support, including access and technology applications for onsite, online, and students at a distance. Students want to receive services on their mobile phones (e.g. they can see if there is a workstation open in a lab from their phone). Students are looking for convenience of service, not content. However, in time, we would like to see more content pushed out to students in this format, not just services.
- There is a lot of interest in creating more synergy between research and teaching.
- Deans have been working with faculty to identify important themes have been identified, along with a list of areas where additional information is needed. At the end of the planning process, the Deans will agree to a set of metrics and analysis tools that will help them gauge the market.
- When the Academic Plan is complete, TRU will begin the consultation process for the next Strategic Plan.
- Flexibility is very important to students. They need to be able to move from one delivery mode to another and not be trapped by a particular delivery mode.
- Further information is available at website
http://www/tru.ca/vpacademic_plan/consultation.html

REPORT OF OFFICERS

J. Murray gave a report which included the following highlights:

- The TRU Law School is moving forward. Christopher Axworthy has been

appointed the new Dean of Law. Faculty appointments are in place and students are being accepted into the program, which will be starting in September 2011.

- Murray Young, Dean of Business & Economics, and PCOL member, has accepted the position of Dean of Business at Mount Royal University effective 2nd August, 2011. Dean Young was thanked for his contributions to PCOL, and was presented with a tea bowl hand-crafted by one of TRU's Arts students as a token of appreciation. TRU has appointed a new Dean of Business & Economics: Russell Currie.
- Since the Planning Council's last meeting in November 2010, we have had successful conclusion to the TRU Faculty Association negotiations and a new Collective Agreement is now in place.
- TRU's President has undertaken an initiative to look at blended learning. We are hosting an event on June 14th looking at the concept of blended learning; Anya Kamenetz will be speaking at that event. Norm Friesen, Canada Research Chair, will be working with Anya. The blended learning activity will continue through the summer and then everyone will reconvene in September to look at implementing initiatives that arise from next week's event. Judith Murray and Dean Charlie Webber are also presenting at that event.
- We have new OL Scholar who is anticipated to arrive before the end of June. David (Dai) Griffiths, from the University of Bolton in the United Kingdom, is Professor of Educational Cybernetics and specializes in research and development in the area of learning design.
- When TRU took over the Open University and Open College, campus was on the Datatel student information system and Open Learning was on the Banner system, so we have gone through a process to convert all departments to the newest version of Banner (Project Sage). Open Learning has been at the forefront of this project. We've had a few difficulties and challenges during the conversion, and face many operational challenges relating to the new system ahead.
- Staffing: Barbara Hubert has replaced Andre Larouche as Director, Business Intelligence & Operations. Kristine Smalcel Pedersen, Director of Enrolment Services, has accepted a position at another institution so we are seeking a replacement.
- TRU is installing the new President and Chancellor today.

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)

Dr. Christine Wihak, Director, PLAR, gave a PowerPoint presentation which included the following highlights:

- The term "Credit Bank" was first used in the 1980s, and it included generous transfer credit, workplace training and individual PLAR. At that time, BCOU was a leader in introducing PLAR in BC. That part of BCOU's "unusualness" is now standard – all universities and community colleges now offer PLAR.
- In OL, we have a different demographic to campus, and students are trying to complete credentials whilst doing other things. There is a huge market for

- older students to be serviced through PLAR.
- TRU accepts credit earned through PLAR (as transfer credit) from all Canadian accredited post-secondary institutions using CAEL principles.
 - There are three PLAR options:
 - Credit Bank
 - Portfolio-based PLAR assessment
 - Course challenge exams
 - Within portfolio-based PLAR assessment, there is competency based and course based assessment.
 - Strong academic oversight and rigour is built into the process.
 - PLAR is very well respected in the USA, and American institutions accept our credits. The PLAR website lists institutions that we have agreements with.
 - The maximum number of credits that can be awarded on campus is 25% of a student's program. In OL, in theory, all of our credentials could be completed 100% through PLAR except one. In actuality, because of general education requirements or disciplinary requirements, it is almost inconceivable that someone could PLAR an entire credential. The average number of PLAR credits awarded to a student is 34 credits; they would need to earn 120 credits for a Degree.
 - Challenges for TRU:
 - Increasing acceptance of PLAR credits by other institutions
 - Culturally appropriate PLAR for aboriginal students, immigrants, international students
 - Recruiting assessors for credit bank evaluations.
 - Further information is available on the TRU-OL PLAR website at <http://www.tru.ca/distance/services/plar-ol.html>

MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION ALLOWED FOR OPEN LEARNING PROGRAMS

At present, only one academic area within Open Learning limits the amount of PLAR applicable to a credential. All business programs restrict PLAR credit to a maximum of 50% of the credential.

Student Service rationale: The current constraint is binding in that several students come to TRU-OL with an accounting designation attained previously through the CA, CMA, or CGA accounting associations' education arm. These credits are properly labelled PLAR and are often determined to be worth up to 90 academic credits (75% of the credential sought).

Academic rationale: All learning that is given PLAR credit is assessed by TRU using methods that meet or exceed international standards in giving university credit for learning acquired outside the accredited university environment.

TRU Act rationale: The TRU Act states 3(1) "The purposes of the university are: (D) to provide an open learning educational credit bank for students". When students

remove credit from the TRU credit bank, it is in the form of PLAR. Restricting the quantity of PLAR allowed therefore limits the usefulness of the credit bank and therefore reduces the 'openness' of TRU-OL.

Students seeking accounting designations are currently only allowed to transfer in 60 credits, so they are forced to do more courses to finish their degree. It is proposed to lift this constraint in the area of Business. If the proposal goes forward, then Business students would be the only students affected.

The restriction on transfer credit is 105 credits. Transfer credit does not count for residency. PCOL has decreed that for a degree, a student has to earn 15 TRU credits, so the maximum that can be transferred in is 105 credits. TRU has determined that transfer credit can only be applied when it comes from accredited institutions. In the records system, a distinction is made between PLAR and transfer credit. In terms of the Director of Enrolment Services' definition, these have to be considered as PLAR credits.

Gord Tarzwell explained that the scope of the proposed change would decline over time. Currently, accounting bodies require students to get a Bachelor's degree before getting an accounting designation. However, that was not the case in the 1980s so there are lots of accountants without degrees.

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED that there be no limit on the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition credits allowable for all Open Learning credentials.

G. Tarzwell

OPEN LEARNING PROGRAMS/COURSES – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

G. Tarzwell presented the following report, for information only:

FILM 3991 Cinematic Visions of the Apocalypse

Prerequisites: 60 Credits of course work is strongly recommended

CRIM 2261 Criminal Law

Prerequisites: CRIM 1161 recommended

CRIM 3311 Advanced Theoretical Perspectives

Prerequisites: Introduction to Criminology or a Psychology or Sociology of Crime course recommended

BIOL 1593/1693 Anatomy and Physiology Labs I & II (previously HLSC 159/169)

Prerequisites: BIOL 1595 – BIOL 12, CHEM 11 strongly recommended. BIOL 1695 – BIOL 1593 & 1595 or equivalent are strongly recommended

HLTH 3701 Healthy Aging: A Contemporary Perspective

No Prerequisites

RESH 3501 Research Methods

Prerequisites: 60 credits of coursework (Research: Languages & Methodologies) and STAT 1201 or equivalent are strongly recommended

COURSE CLOSURES:**ADMN 477 E-Business in a Competitive Environment**

Prerequisites: Experience using the Internet, or approval of the program area. Third-year university standing and familiarity with information technology concepts are recommended

FRST 305 Silviculture I

Prerequisites: FRST 112/122, 211 and 220

MATH 010 Practical Mathematics

No Prerequisites

SCIE 010 General Science

Prerequisites: MATH 010 or equivalent is recommended

SSWP 109 Introductory Counselling Skills

No Prerequisites

SSWP 110 Introduction to Counselling Skills

Prerequisites: SSWP 109 or completion of three course assignments in SSWP 109 or approval of the program area.

S. Jackson

ENROLMENTS

G. Tarzwell, on behalf of C. Beddome, reported that for 2010/11, Open Learning had approximately 20,115 enrolments (including PLAR), which is slightly up from last year (less than 1%). The percentage of returning students has increased slightly. The utilization rate is 104%.

However, FTEs are down from last year, due to the types of enrolments we are getting. In Open Learning our health-related enrolments are worth more FTEs than academic enrolments. This year, Open Learning has seen a decrease in health-related enrolments/FTEs, but an increase in academic enrolments/FTEs. This may be because in FY10 we had a lot of catch-up with Bachelor of Health Science PLAR activity. That activity has slowed down in FY11, but we are in the process of increasing our PLAR portfolio in health-related areas (especially in Ontario) for the future.

ACCESS COPYRIGHT ISSUES UPDATE – D. CLOWATER/N. LEVESQUE

Nancy Levesque, Director of Library Services, and Desseri Clowater, OL Intellectual Property Supervisor, outlined current access copyright issues and answered

questions. The following points emerged:

- TRU Campus (not OL) have had a licence with access copyright, which allowed students, faculty, researchers, etc. to make copies that went beyond the Copyright Act. This was available to us for study, teaching and learning purposes, for which we paid \$3 per FTE. Course packs incurred royalty fees in addition to copyright fees. The licence was due for renewal last summer. Access Copyright decided not to renew, and filed a new proposal with the Copyright Board of Canada that would be dealt with directly by them. Universities and colleges objected, and on December 23, 2010 the Copyright Board filed for an interim tariff to be brought into effect. The Copyright Board proposes charging \$45 per FTE, which represents an increase of \$42 per FTE. It is possible this could be as high as \$100 per FTE, as the Access Copyright Board wants to get a fair market price for the material students are using on their phones etc. When the tariff becomes finalized in 2013, it could be retroactive to 1 January, 2011.
- Access copyright has in the past dealt with print copying (all paper); now they have redefined copying to include digital copying (hyperlinking etc.). Many institutions are opting out of the tariff. We could set up our own copyright clearance centres in-house and get copyright approval in-house. Nancy Levesque commented she is concerned that we will have to pay twice for material already cleared for copy, and she believes there needs to be exemptions for educational purposes.
- It will be 2013 before this goes to the Copyright Board. In the meantime, many institutions are dropping out and doing their own in-house copyright clearing. TRU Open Learning clears copyright in-house through the OL Intellectual Property Office.
- There are concerns around:
 - the volume of copyright clearance needed
 - academic freedom
 - cost
- N. Levesque and D. Clowater will keep the Planning Council apprised of the situation.

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was received.

CLOSING REMARKS

The next meeting of the Planning Council for Open Learning will be held on 17 November, 2011.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 am.