

THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY  
PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING  
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 15, 2007

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Council for Open Learning, held in the CN Boardroom of the Clock Tower Building, Kamloops, B.C.

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ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
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<b>Planning Council Present:</b>	M. Evered, Chair J. Murray, Vice-Chair G. Tarzwell C. Beddome D. Noakes M. Young I. Rich-McQuay D. Loblaw (Teleconference) D. Stanley (Teleconference) L. Jacques J. Gaskell A. Tucker D. Johnson	<b>Planning Council Absent:</b> J. Keller L. Krohn D. McBain J. LaBrie
<b>Executive and Others Present:</b>	J. Sparks, Associate Vice President, Legal Affairs D. Sproull, Secretary, Academic Governance	

**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 9:35 a.m.

J. Murray introduced C. Beddome, Chief Recruitment Officer - OL, and Gordon Tarzwell, Associate Vice-President – OL. She explained that G. Tarzwell is responsible for the educational aspects of Open Learning and C. Beddome is responsible for the pre-admission aspects of Open Learning.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

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

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### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the meeting of May 24, 2007 as distributed.* **D. Sproull**

### **REPORT OF OFFICERS**

#### **Provost and Vice-President, Academic**

M. Evered reported that the TRU Strategic Plan for 2007 – 2017 has been finalized and circulated copies for information.

He reported on the reviews being conducted at TRU which include the library and the academic administrative structure. In both instances, external consultants have been engaged for advice. The Planning Council will be informed of the outcome of the reviews. **M. Evered**

M. Evered indicated that TRU is in the process of hiring a new Chief Enrolment Officer that will work with C. Beddome and TRU World.

#### **Vice-President, Open Learning**

J. Murray reported that TRU is continuing to request an alternative formula for the Open Learning funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED). Last summer, AVED had consultants conduct a review that has reaffirmed the issue of inadequate funding. At this time, TRU is still awaiting a response from AVED.

A separate review was conducted at Open Learning with respect to its current information technology. The review has revealed that Open Learning is at risk of system failure and needs to be upgraded.

J. Murray reported that the relocation of people and operations in Open Learning from Burnaby to Kamloops was completed on June 30, 2007. This involved moving 170 jobs of which only 30 people from BCOU/OC relocated. The Open Learning Division feels this a time for new beginnings that include new people, structures and processes. Open Learning has been integrated with the TRU academic units which are responsible for the academic integrity of programming. As a result of the evolution of the new structure, Open Learning has hired Academic Directors in Arts, Science, Business and Nursing.

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There has also been the creation of the several Open Learning committees: Program Committee, Partnership Committee and Student Advisory Committees (2).

J. Murray announced that there were 6 students that participated in the Fall convocation ceremonies at TRU which is a reminder that the Open Learning students do graduate from programs.

She also announced that on November 2, 2007, Premier Campbell attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the grand opening of the B.C. Centre for Open Learning.

J. Murray highlighted the future direction of the Open Learning Division. Its differentiations are to provide exceptional service to the learners, innovative course and programs and to partner with other institutions. Its aspiration is to be a provincial, national and international leader in the areas of customer service, distance delivery, prior learning assessment, adaptive testing, pedagogy and curriculum production.

The current enrolments at Open Learning were reviewed as being comparable with last year. The open college enrolments continue to decline due to the program closures. However, the open university enrolments have increased.

J. Murray reported that the Open Learning Division has hired J. Read as the Manager of Marketing and Communications. The current ad campaign features the concept of accepting that Open Learning is different.

### **OPEN LEARNING PROGRAMS**

#### **New Program Initiatives**

The Chair reviewed a flowchart that identifies the linkages of the curricular approval process with Open Learning. He reminded everyone that the *TRU Act* and the *University Act* defines the power and responsibilities of the Planning Council with respect to the residency and admission requirements of the Open Learning programming. It was noted that a revised flowchart will be provided at the next meeting with the inclusion of the Planning Council in the approval process.

**G. Tarzwell  
/ M. Evered**

At the request of the Chair, G. Tarzwell presented the following new program initiatives: Bachelor of Public Administration, Registered Nurse Practice Program (formerly the Registered Nurse Refresher Program), Water Treatment Technology Certificate and Water Treatment Technology Diploma.

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*G. Tarzwell will contact the Academic Director of Nursing to determine why the admission requirements for the Registered Nurse Practice Program include a Health Status Declaration and to report back to the Planning Council on this matter.* **G. Tarzwell**

A discussion ensued regarding the open admission requirements. Concern was expressed that it is a balancing act with the open admission in that you allow people to try but not fail.

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** that the admission requirements for Open Learning will remain open unless there is a mandatory requirement by a governing or licensing body with the understanding that the exceptions will be brought forward to the Planning Council for Open Learning.*

### **Course Closures**

G. Tarzwell reported that NURS 350 has been closed due to outdated material.

*On motion duly made and adopted, it was **RESOLVED** approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the course closure for NURS 350.* **M. Evered**

### **Residency Requirements**

J. Murray lead a discussion on what is deemed an acceptable residency requirement whilst providing an academically sound education and still maintaining the open mandate needed for student flexibility. It was suggested that it would be useful to gather data on what other institutions are doing.

J. Murray offered to research the residency requirements and to bring forward a proposal and rationale at the next meeting. **J. Murray**

### **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

At the previous meeting, a motion was passed whereby Senate was encouraged to remove the open learning designation on the remaining credentials. The Chair reported that the respective academic units were tasked with resolving this request by December 2007. The Faculty of Arts are expected to present their resolution at the December Senate meeting. All other open learning designations have been removed.

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**OPEN LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS**

C. Beddome reported that the newly established OL Partnerships Committee has met three times and have reviewed the 18 agreements that are currently in place. The Committee wants to proceed strategically in coming up with a plan and standardizing the process for areas in which to interface with. The Committee will also be engaged in investigating the Memorandums of Understanding that are in place but not currently active. The third area of interest for the Committee is the response contacts. Tracking how many times there has been contact and coming up with a strategy to ensure we are benefiting and coordinating efforts.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

It was proposed that the next meeting be held on May 8, 2008. The day and time will be confirmed by email notice. The Chair thanked everyone for their participation. **D. Sproull**

*The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.*

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Planning Council Chair

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Planning Council Vice-Chair