

VICE PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC COUNCIL (VPAC)

MINUTES

Friday, April 29, 2011 9.30 am

New Westminster Boardroom

Present: Thor Borgford, Robert Buller, Catherine Carlson, Kathy Denton (Chair), Ted James, Meg Stainsby, Gary Tennant, Silvia Wilson, Tom Whalley, Anne Gapper (recorder)

1. Approvals

1.1 Agenda

The following items were added to the agenda:

- 4.7 Planning for Next Year – Gary
- 4.8 CELBAN Test – Silvia
- 4.9 Post-Degree Diplomas –
- 4.10 Vacation/Accountable Time – Meg
- 5.2 Concept Paper BA in Liberal & Business Studies
- 5.3 Dedicating Sections

1.2 The notes of January 21, 2011 were approved as presented.

1.3 The minutes of March 11, 2011 were approved as presented.

1.4 The notes of March 25, 2011 were amended slightly. Approved as amended.

1.5 The minutes of April 1, 2011 were approved as presented.

2. Follow Up

2.1 Update on Faculty Orientation

Gary Tennant handed out a tentative schedule of workshops and events for new faculty. These will also be open to faculty who have been at the College for a short while. Gary agreed to arrange a follow up orientation for those who do not attend the initial orientations.

3. Decisions Required

There were no items under this heading.

4. Discussion

4.1 Academic Affairs Membership

Tom Whalley requested each Faculty ensure they have an appointed member to this committee plus an alternate.

4.2 Faculty Awards

The Academic Affairs Committee is working on this to come up with recognition for three types of roles; teaching, scholarly activity and service.

4.3 Program Review Schedule

Currently Economics, Political Science and English as a Second Language and Developmental Studies are being reviewed.

Suggestions for the 2011/12 academic year with a reporting out date of the end of May are :

Dental

Communications/Print Futures

Physics

Criminology

Computing Science

Youth Justice

Suggestions for the 2012/13 academic year are :

Health Information Management

English or Modern Language

Psychology (to be confirmed)

Geology

4.4 Grading Task Force

Discussion ensued about discrepancies in grading within the College and also in comparison to other institutions. Concern was expressed about the percentage of A's awarded in some programs. It was agreed that each Faculty would look at their own programs, comparing similar programs rather than all programs together. Kathy Denton suggested that the discussion look at what is outside of normal, being mindful of those areas with degrees. Ted James will investigate further into other institutions' grading levels and will then raise this issue at Education Council.

4.5 Partnership with Thompson Rivers University (TRU)

During discussion, it was established that some of the current memorandums of understanding with TRU are with TRU Campus rather than TRU Open Learning, which means that students have to move to Kamloops. Kathy Denton is currently working with TRU Open Learning to establish a list of pre-approved psychology courses which will avoid students having to obtain letters of permission from advisors before taking courses at Douglas College. Once this work is finished she will bring the list to VPAC for information.

Kathy requested deans look at their programs and see if there are pathways to a TRU degree and which courses would be involved. Possibilities to explore will be discussed at the next VPAC meeting.

4.6 Douglas College Grade Percentages

See item 4.4 above.

4.7 Planning for Next Year

Kathy Denton will refresh the SMT goals and will distribute. Experiential learning will be included. There was a discussion about how broad or narrow a definition of experiential learning would be. This item will be discussed at the next planning meeting to develop a process for identifying what kind of experiential activities are available for students.

4.8 CELBAN Test

Silvia Wilson reported that this is English Language assessment for nurses. The Canadian benchmark now is that all nurses will have to pass this test before they write the CRNBC exam. Silvia indicated that a high degree of failures in the BSN program are due to oral language difficulties. It was suggested that students could opt to take a CE course prepping them for the CELBAN Test. Silvia will explore this further.

4.9 Post Degree Diploma

Discussion ensued about what would constitute a post degree diploma at Douglas. It was suggested that post degree diplomas that contain courses at an advanced level should be called post graduate diplomas as to post degree diplomas which contain existing diploma courses. It was agreed that all post degree diplomas should have a certain number of upper level courses. Ted will investigate the term post graduate to see if it would be acceptable by the Ministry and will report back at the next meeting.

4.10 PD/Accountable Time

Discussed.

5. Information/Announcements

5.1 Updates for Task Forces

Deferred to the next meeting

5.2 Concept Paper for the BA in Liberal and Business Studies

Any concerns were to be addressed with Catherine Carlson prior to Thursday May 4, 2011.

5.3 Dedicating Sections

Discussion about problems arising from the earlier registration date.

6. Reports

No reports

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1.15 pm