

**Minutes of Vice President's Academic Council (VPAC)**  
**Friday, October 31, 2008 – 9:00am**  
**NWC Boardroom**

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**Present:** Robert Buller, Jan Carrie, Barbara Bessey for Laureen Dailey (Recorder), Kathy Denton, David Duke, Keith Ellis, Ted James, Jan Lindsay (Chair), Joy Page, Mike Tarko

**Guests:** Trish Angus, Registrar; Susan Briggs, Peter Wilkins, DCFA; Sharon Smith, Regional Student Transition Coordinator; Tom Whalley, Scholarly Activity Coordinator

**1.0 APPROVALS**

**1.1 Agenda**

The agenda was approved as distributed.

**1.2 Minutes**

The minutes of October 10, 2008 were approved as distributed.

**2.0 BUSINESS ARISING**

**2.1 Academic Affairs – Member-at-Large Recommendations**

One new member-at-large is needed for the Academic Affairs Committee, to join Kristin Wagner (Psychology) who was named at the last meeting. Wendy Parry's name (CCSD Coordinator) was put forward and accepted. D. Duke will speak with K. Ellis regarding what he sees is a gap from the Sciences area.

**ACTION: J. Lindsay will send out a College-wide notification of the two new Academic Affairs Members-at-Large, and will review the Terms of Reference to ascertain whether it is possible to have a third member at-large.**

**2.2 Budget Update**

J. Lindsay thanked the Deans for their contribution to the SMT budget discussion, adding there was positive feedback from SMT members.

The next step in the process of budget development is for each Faculty to look at their area using a zero sum approach to meeting the 09/10 budget requirements. SMT has taken a first look at OTO requirements.

**ACTION: The November 21<sup>st</sup> regular VPAC meeting will be extended through the afternoon, with the afternoon devoted to budget. J. Lindsay will look into holding it off-site.**

**2.3 TRU Update**

TRU has proposed some changes to the MOU. At this point we will sign off a general MOU and will include more details in any subsequent MOU that is developed to outline the conditions of a specific collaborative program.

## 2.4 SFU MOU

J. Lindsay met with Jon Driver, the new VP Academic and Provost at SFU who expressed support for moving forward with the co-admission pilot proposal that had been discussed with his predecessor, John Waterhouse. We have since been informed that J. Driver is prepared to move the Douglas/SFU co-admission forward on the Registrar's authority and we may hear something today. We expect it to be a dual admission stream for a limited number of students similar to the Oregon State system. J. Lindsay hopes we can complete the MOU for May 2009.

## 3. NEW BUSINESS

### 3.1 Business Case for Requesting Receiving Institution Designation

J. Lindsay noted that a recent BCCAT review shows Douglas is one of the major receiving institutions amongst colleges in the lower mainland (6.2%). VPAC worked through the 9 recommendations in the document developed by T. Angus. It was noted that block transfer arrangements are already in the transfer guide, and what we are addressing is the course by course articulation (courses and programs). J. Lindsay noted that becoming a receiving institution fits with the strategic direction of the 2009 to 2012 Academic Plan to build structures that support the quality and strength of our degree programs.

#### **ACTION:**

- 1. J. Lindsay will advise Education Council of the need to develop a transfer credit policy and request that this be referred to the Policy Committee.**
- 2. A Task Group consisting of T. Angus, M. Tarko, K. Denton and J. Carrie will review transfer credit policies at other institutions and propose some draft policy language that outlines how Douglas College uses and awards transfer credit. They will also consider reasonable timelines for reviewing curriculum and assess if timelines can be built into the policy. This information will be forwarded to the EDCO Policy Committee as a recommendation once it has been reviewed by VPAC.**
- 3. T. Angus will invite BCCAT to lead a training session for the Registration Office and the Faculties when the timing is appropriate.**
- 4. Further discussion will occur regarding who in each Faculty will be named as being responsible for reviewing requests for articulation throughout the year and how time will be made available for the work.**

It was discussed that Deans should be kept informed when articulation requests are forwarded to the named articulation assessor for the Faculty. T. Angus was thanked for her detailed work on this topic.

**ACTION: The Business Case for Requesting Receiving Institution Designation will be an ongoing agenda item.**

### 3.2 **Regional Student Transition Coordinator – Report on Activities**

S. Smith explained that the consortium includes Douglas, BCIT and the New Westminster, Coquitlam and Burnaby School Districts. J. Page supervises the Coordinator position. S. Smith's report covered the three months she has been on the job.

S. Smith noted that the School Districts feel they need to market concurrent studies better to their students. K. Denton commented that students can go to our website to see what is available. Any first year course would be fine for a concurrent study student. Closed programs would have to be on a list once we know enrollment numbers.

**ACTION: K. Denton will email S. Smith a “key facts” document she can forward to the School Districts.**

J. Lindsay reminded VPAC that SMT had supported waiving of fees, such as the college application fee and athletic fee for concurrent studies students.

A number of initiatives have/will happen that bring high school students on campus, such as the Burnaby students from their chefs training and hospitality management programs coming to visit the HORM program, providing a positive introduction to Douglas.

J. Lindsay asked if there was support for continuing with the annual High School articulation meeting. It was agreed that this be continued (late April) with Coquitlam, Burnaby, New West and BCIT, but limit the involvement to Douglas Chairs/Coordinators to areas of where there is a high degree of relevancy. S. Smith will proceed with organizing this event for April 09.

J. Lindsay thanked S. Smith for her efforts, noting that the groundwork she is doing will assist the Chairs and Coordinators to develop new articulation MOUs.

### 3.3 **Academic Plan - DCFA Feedback**

Peter Wilkins explained that while he hasn't heard any specific concerns from faculty, he has some problems with the document that relate to technology, language, clarity for users, and a lack of strategy in the document. The technology issue is that of requiring faculty to have a running grade book online, and to post electronic notices of illness and class cancellations. S. Briggs noted it is a tech change issue because of increasing workload, as well as being a pedagogical issue in that it limits beneficial in-person contact between instructor and student(s). J. Lindsay noted there is a body of research that indicates the more students have access to grade information (cumulative grade score) the more likely they are to take corrective action as necessary. As well, the intent is to move toward a running grade book online over the three year period - not immediately.

Following the PowerPoint presentation provided by Peter Wilkins, the Chair noted that some of the “big picture” strategy that the DCFA is looking for is more appropriate for inclusion in the College Strategic Plan, while some of the specific details they are looking for will appear in the Tactical Plans. The Academic Plan was written with a high level of faculty involvement, and is centered on goals that are broad enough to speak to faculty across the institution. We have gone through a time of rapid growth and the Plan is

focused on strategies to secure the quality of what we have developed. We are talking more about achieving program accreditation and memberships (e.g., NSERC).

J. Lindsay thanked the DCFA, noting that a number of changes have already been made to the draft Plan already based on their feedback and feedback received at the forum or through Divisional meetings. The re-draft goes to Education Council next and their feedback that relates to the Academic Plan (as opposed to the Strategic Plan or Tactical Plans) will be considered before it goes to the College Board in January. The Chair thanked P. Wilkins and S. Briggs for their detailed work.

R. Buller commented on the helpful feedback received earlier from the Educational Services Division, particularly from Institutional Research and Communications & Marketing.

#### 3.4 **Faculty-based Scholarly Activity Committees**

This was a follow-up to earlier discussions about having such committees in each Faculty. VPAC was reminded that using the Academic Affairs Committee as an Advisory Committee for Scholarly Activity was a temporary measure until the Faculty-based committees were developed. It was proposed that Deans consider establishment of a Scholarly Activity Committee within their Faculty and that a representative from each committee would be appointed to serve on a college-wide Scholarly Activity Advisory Committee. M. Tarko will circulate the Terms of Reference that have been developed for the Scholarly Activity Committee in Health Sciences.

#### 3.5 **Student Retention Ideas**

R. Buller distributed documentation, noting that our loss rate is higher than our peer-set (>35%). He indicated that experience in other institutions shows that if we can get students to stay here for a year, the odds are they will complete their credential here. He discussed ways of turning students on in class (e.g., get the most engaging teachers to teach the introductory courses), and how teachers can help each other. R. Buller shared a range of retention strategies that he was familiar with from his work at other institutions (Queen's and Kwantlen). There was unanimous appreciation for the ideas R. Buller discussed.

#### 3.6 **Scholarly Activity Funding Recommendations**

The October 2008 recommendations were distributed by T. Whalley. New this year is the availability of two time releases. About half the recommendations are for conference presentations with the other half to new research. T. Whalley suggested that we need to look at the issue of consistency for how we handle faculty taking time off from teaching to present at conferences. He expects there will be an issue with the budget a year from now. Also being planned is a college-wide undergraduate research day. While T. Whalley had a date in mind, there was some concern about where it was placed in the semester. He will take another look at the date before it is announced.

**ACTION: VPAC approved the Scholarly Activity funding recommendations.**

## 4.0 INFORMATION

### 4.1 **Proposal for Third Centre of Excellence**

The Academic Plan calls for discussion and identification of a third Center of Excellence. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) cohort group has forwarded a recommendation that the third Center become a Center for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. It was noted that this research has application in all disciplines. J. Lindsay noted we are getting some prominence for our SoTL work (recent presentations at the ISSTOL conference in Edmonton and ACCC in Ottawa) and feels this could be a good fit.

### 4.2 **Administrative Policies for NSERC Eligibility**

J. Lindsay advised that the policies for NSERC eligibility went to SMT in October and were approved. There is some minor revision based on some feedback that came later. Deans are to give any further feedback to J. Lindsay as quickly as possible as she will be informing SMT of any significant changes at the November 18<sup>th</sup> SMT Planning Day.

### 4.3 **Labour Relations Update**

J. Lindsay briefed the Deans on a labour relations issue.

### 4.4 **Strategic Development Outcomes Report – Spring 2007**

Deans are to let the VPE's Office know of any changes that need to be made to the Strategic Development Outcomes Report before it is forwarded to SMT.

## 5.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 5.1 **High School Contacts**

See item 3.2 above.

### 5.2 **External Contacts**

No report

### 5.3 **Provincial Articulation Meetings**

*BCCAT*

No report

*SAAF*

J. Lindsay reported there is a strong desire to work more collaboratively in the Lower Mainland. The new regional universities were at the table and want to work with us.

*Provincial Deans/Directors*

J. Carrie reported that with the Ministry mandate now including 3 -5 years olds and the capacity for ECE students within the system, the Provincial Deans are wondering if they will be asked to ramp up again, and if dollars will come with any request. There was a commitment from the HS Deans to work more closely together and with provincial groups

regarding student retention. Six of the Deans at the table reported that their institutions are into Presidential searches.

M. Tarko reported that half the Health Sciences Deans are new. Ministry representatives are still working with the Ministry of Health on priorities.

T. James advised that the Developmental Deans have met and will meet again next month. The Literacy Coordinator position has been split: .5 to Student Development and .5 to The Training Group.

#### 5.4 **VPAC Standing Committees**

##### ***ETTL***

The committee meets next week.

##### ***Academic Affairs***

D. Duke advised work is under way on the Student Research Day mentioned earlier, and on the Speakers Series. He will put strategic enrollment on the next meeting agenda.

##### ***TPMC/ETF***

R. Buller noted that the TPMC/ETF meetings will be rescheduled so they don't conflict with the VPAC schedule, which will then allow him to attend.

##### ***Academic Signature***

No meetings have occurred, but the pre-testing has been completed. M. Tarko will test exiting Nurses in January/February. He and K. Denton will have tested about 260 students between them.

#### 5.5 **Education Council**

Kathy reported significant feedback was received on the Academic Freedom policy, and also the Research Ethics policy.

#### 5.6 **CE/TTG Coordination Committee**

With L.R. Legge having left the College, there is a need to find a new Chair for the CE/TTG Coordination Committee. R. Buller will be meeting with Dean Howie next week. R. Buller will ensure a meeting of the Committee is called.

#### 6. **Reminders**

Deans were reminded about the Employee Retirement Dinner on November 7th.

#### 7. **Next meeting: November 21, 2008, 9:00am – 4:30pm, location TBA**

#### 8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.