

ACADEMIC PLAN WORKBOOK:

Educating for a New Century by Entertaining and Attaining Possibilities

Draft September 8, 2004

Revised September 12, 2004 (in red)

1. PREAMBLE AND DISCUSSION

The creation of UBC Okanagan presents a myriad of opportunities and challenges. It is necessary to collaboratively conduct an "Academic Planning Process" to create the blueprint for the future of UBC Okanagan. This blueprint goes well beyond curriculum to the very core of our academic values, structure, governance, pedagogy and learning/research aspirations for the future. The Academic Plan Working Group (APWG), a sub-committee of the Academic Advisory Council for UBC Okanagan, is tasked with designing the academic planning process and with delivering an Academic Plan in consultation with the various communities of interest.

Like the Academic Plan crafted for UBC Vancouver in the year 2000, the Academic Plan that we are working towards sets out ideas and actions designed to help shape the academic future and learning/research environment for UBC Okanagan. The Academic Plan needs to take its high level direction for TREK 2010: A Global Journey. In many ways, it is helpful that the TREK process parallels the academic planning process for UBC Okanagan. The ideas and actions in the UBCO Academic Plan are intended to guide faculty, staff, students and alumni in building the UBC envisioned by TREK 2010.

The intent of this Academic Plan Workbook is not to constrain the range of ideas and actions that the APWG might contemplate. Rather, this document is intended as a means of orienting the group's work within the dictates of the tight timetable imposed on us by the academic year. Its content is as follows:

1. Preamble and Discussion
2. Themes and Cross-cutting Topics
3. Academic Plan Working Group Terms of Reference
4. Academic Plan Timeline

Nature of desired outcomes from APWG deliberations

To maximize the relevance, utility and credibility of the Academic Plan the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the President want very specific and measurable outcomes from APWG. The APWG, as a sub-committee of the Academic Advisory Council, will report regularly to the Council. While the substance of the APWG's proposals, actions and ideas is clearly the purview of the APWG, there are several features that need to be included.

- the proposed outcomes need to be measurable so we can see when we succeed or fail at achieving them.
- clear priorities need to be set among the actions and ideas being put forward in the proposals so that we can devote our scarce time and financial resources to the most important.
- the priorities should effectively advance the Core Values and resolve the Core Questions (to be provided in the Academic Plan Workbook).
- these proposals need to provide clear guidance for the search for prospective faculty and staff to carry out the Academic Plan to ensure that our colleagues of the future continue to think along broad, flexible and community-wide lines.

When formulating its proposals, the APWG should keep the following parameters in mind: 1) they should be clear and unambiguous to all: faculty, staff, students, the senior University administration, and the external communities we serve; 2) the proposals should clearly set out our priorities for making choices in the future, indicating the kind of institution we want to

become in the future and how we will get there; and, 3) the proposals should promote flexibility, innovation, and the breaking down of barriers that have hindered our responsiveness to changing conditions and demands.

In effect, the proposals will provide the priorities and guidelines that will empower people throughout UBCO to make the difficult choices that lie ahead. In so doing, we will realize the potential of UBCO and the potential of each member of the UBCO community.

Discussion [with thanks to Blane Despres for authoring this thoughtful and provocative discussion section]

The present situation and predicament of OUC—soon to be UBCO—is how it could appear, or the particular form it could take in the immediate future and over the course of the next several years in such a way as to be vital to students, fresh in its approach to delivering means and modes of learning, yet within the confines of budgets, faculty buy-in and the perceived parameters of what constitutes a university. However, three potentially debilitating problems stand as potential barriers to progress toward a radical and truly novel approach to facilitating learning through the university in this 21st C.

First, OUC is an already established and functioning institution. As such, it carries the encrustations of practices, expectations and beliefs, or *prêt-à-porter* institutionalism. This institutionalism is not formidable, but it does compound the difficulty of avoiding the “reinvention of the wheel”. [There is more to it than this. There is already an institutional culture in place that may or may not be appropriate for UBCO. This is probably both a strength and a weakness, but must, in any case, be taken into account. More specifically, there are distinct differences between the culture of universities and colleges. These differences in culture affect both students and faculty. On both sides, the set of received assumptions need to be critically examined.]

Second, the breadth of vision of possibilities by the APWG and stakeholders is sufficiently constrained, even confined some might say (Contenta, 1993; Cuban, 1984; Kuhn, 1996), by the acculturation of the socialization process, including especially schooling from K-12, to colleges and universities. Thus the range of viable options for the development of a truly “fresh” approach to learning risks are being prematurely truncated by a formative and entrenched experience.

Third, the university dynamic is potentially hampered by the contradiction of precedent business cultural leanings. That is, since the turn of the 20th century when “scientific management” became adopted in education (see Raymond Callahan’s work, *The Cult of Efficiency*, for an insightful analysis of the development of a business ethos permeating education), the university has become an institution largely run on business principles under the guise of emancipatory education.

Unless these three problem areas are carefully and constructively challenged the APWG can, at best, only be content to play at window-dressing. And, although window-dressing might be “as good as it gets” in the end, this discussion section is a call to the university ethos of challenge, change agency, reflection, learning and practice.

The initial draft of the APWG Terms of Reference (TOR) and the inaugural meeting delineate some of the challenges, but, equally, many exciting possibilities ahead. The premise of this discussion - education as emancipation - is taken here in a broad sense of freedom to learn, freedom from ignorance, freedom to dream and pursue, freedom to challenge and be challenged. With the three problem sets mentioned in the preamble as critical backdrops, three fundamental questions deserve consideration. These are,

- 1) What are the purposes, or goals, of education (in the broadest sense in Canada and globally, and in a narrower sense at UBC Okanagan)?
- 2) What does it look like to attempt to achieve those purposes? That is, what form should the university take, or what are the appropriate and logical design possibilities to achieve successful implementation and attainment of those purposes?

- 3) Finally, what is the appropriate infrastructure needed to ensure successful purposes, from the governance structure, to the implementation schedules, to the techniques of implementation across the campus?

There are other pertinent questions, such as philosophical, practical, social (community/global) and emotional/physical/spiritual considerations, but the three fundamental questions effectively lay the course not only for the possible shape of the university to be, but also for understanding the factors involved in and throughout the discussion. For example, if our collective desire is to not “reinvent the wheel”, then the form/design (question #2) will look different than the present form of OUC. Conversely, if *status quo* (departmentalization, atomistic approach to knowledge, adaptation of other institutional programs) becomes a *de facto* means of achieving educational ends, then we would need to reconfigure the purposes and acquiesce to that wheel. [last sentence is very awkward] It is hoped that the discussions stay open to the possibilities, despite the short time for deliberation or the fear of alternatives.

Bearing in mind that APWG does not have a mandate to change anything, only consider possibilities, let us accept the challenge with vigour.

2. PROPOSED THEMES AND CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

Each of the following themes (with the relevant cross-cutting topics) will be tasked with a specific mandate (open to liberal interpretation as the process evolves) noted below. Each theme will be asked to provide recommendations in three categories: short, medium and long-term. The short-term recommendations are particularly crucial as they are actions that need to be taken by September 2005 when the doors of UBCO open. All recommendations are important, but these short-term ones should be chosen strategically as we craft our vision of the future: what actions now (however challenging or difficult) will set us up for success?

Themes:

Research Intensification: Graduate Studies, Mentorship [Chair: Cynthia Mathieson]

Campus Learning Environment: Pedagogy and Physical Space [Chair: Stephen Foster]

Innovation: Tradition: Governance, Academic Structure, New Programs [Chair: Blane Despres]

Community Relationships: Industry, Community, Citizens [Chair: TBA]

Academic Relationships: New Okanagan College, UBC Vancouver, Global partnerships [Chair: David Scott]

Note also: two wild cards: Bob Belton and Bernie Bauer who will be “floating” amongst the themes asking the hard questions; and, Phil Beckmann and Moura Quayle, who will be doing their best to help everyone deliver a draft plan by early December.

Cross-Cutting Topics:

Technology: How does each theme interact and benefit from available technologies?

Student Experience: How does each theme affect positive student experience on and off-campus?

Faculty and Staff: How do faculty/staff issues, such as reward structure, implicate each theme?

Disciplinary Permeability: How does permeability continuum affect each theme?

Review Mechanisms: What mechanisms should be in place to ensure excellence in each theme?

Space Requirements: What specific space requirements come out of recommendations?

Support Services/Infrastructure: what is needed in these terms to support the themes?

Academic Programs: How do we support existing and new academic programs?

RESEARCH INTENSIFICATION THEME

Chair: Cynthia Mathieson

What is *research intensive*? What does it mean? It seems to be a linchpin driving a lot of the discourse around the evolution of UBCO and it is a central concern/interest of many faculty members.

Mandate:

Referring to the current and transition state documents prepared by the Research Task Force, this theme will focus on the cross-cutting topics (technology, student experience, faculty/staff, disciplinary/interdisciplinary; review mechanisms; space requirements), ideas from the University Circles and the Ideabook as well as the following questions as a start for exploration:

- How can we best articulate the value of research in our academic plan?
- What are the best strategies for mentorship of existing faculty members in their research trajectories?
- By what means can we grow our research base by recruitment of new faculty members, keeping in mind that we are also hiring people to teach? How do we build this tandem capacity?
- What practices will work best for UBCO re: student research training at every level, in many different scenarios?
- What graduate programs and modes of graduate study should we focus on?
- How should we balance the positive and negative tensions between research and teaching, between research programs and curriculum development, and between big "showcase" research and the smaller initiatives?
- What about trans-disciplinary research?
- How do we translate research into the community? How should we work with our research partners such as industry and government?
- What about some special projects: NSERC faculty awards for women, Theresa Cosgrain Award (SSHRC), Fulbrights, CRCs, Leadership Chairs and so on?
- How should we set priorities for institutional research support?

CAMPUS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THEME

Chair: Stephen Foster

As we evolve the Academic Plan at UBCO, we have a unique opportunity to pay attention to where pedagogy and space intersect – our learning environment. The vision for UBC focuses on the student – putting them at the centre of their learning environment. This theme will explore what this might mean for UBCO.

Mandate:

Referring to the current literature on pedagogy and the connection to physical space, (as well as our own experience), this theme will focus on the cross-cutting topics (technology, student experience, faculty/staff, disciplinary/interdisciplinary; review mechanisms; space requirements), ideas from the University Circles and the Ideabook, as well as the following questions as a start for exploration:

- What will a learning-centred environment be like at UBCO? How viable is it to move to problem-based learning, project-based learning, learning modules and medium-size group learning? It is important to realize that there is no universal panacea, no one size or one tactic fits all approach to learning.
- What about timetabling and organizing everyone's time to be more effective – giving students time for reflection and faculty members time for quality student interaction and their own research?
- Where does e-learning fit in? How can we best take advantage of the technologies such as WEB-CT and others?
- What should our learning spaces look in response to our pedagogical models?
- What about informal learning spaces?

- What about the campus itself – where does the most intellectual activity take place?
- How do we make this learning environment inspirational for students, faculty, staff and the community?
- How is physical space critical to forming the character and distinctiveness of UBCO?

INNOVATION: TRADITION THEME

Chair: Blane Despres

In the spirit of inquiry, challenge and debate, this theme will examine the core area of Innovation : Tradition. In the context of the future UBCO and the challenges of the APWG, we have opportunities: some wild and fanciful, others tried and codified. Consider that we bring a diversity of perceptions to the discussion, perceptions of purposes, of directions, of possibilities, and all shaded in the politics of desire, whether the desire for more time, more money, more info and details, more options, more or less of the same. Also consider that there are four (at least) critical factors categories that weigh on our discussions and directions: philosophical, practical, social and emotional/physical/spiritual.

Mandate:

Referring to the current literature on innovation and change in education, (as well as our own experience), this theme will focus on the cross-cutting topics (technology, student experience, faculty/staff, disciplinary/interdisciplinary; review mechanisms; space requirements), ideas from the University Circles and the Ideabook, as well as the following questions as a start for exploration:

- In regard to programs, degrees, courses, if the UBCO focus is oriented along business lines, then are we dealing with ways and means of thinking about knowledge differently, for example, as a commodity? That is, if we're "selling" our services for bums-in-seats, then there is a fiscal prime consideration. If the UBCO focus is the quest for knowledge, personal growth, learning for living/living for learning, then are we dealing with ways and means of fostering these goals through modeling, challenge, example, reflection, alternatives?
- What are the legitimate or authentic themes to be explored and considered, and why those?
- What are the factors that must be considered if UBCO is to develop as a place of innovation that also takes into consideration traditional practices, policies and beliefs? That is, what is the range of possibilities between the way things could be and the way things are?
 - a. Does UBCO/the APWG want to explore and consider the way things could be?
 - b. What does it mean to consider innovation alongside tradition?
 - c. Whose version of innovation (whacky to conservative) and tradition (whacky to *status quo*) do we authenticate?
 - d. What are the guidelines (desired, reasonable, contestable) necessary for progress in this core area?

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS THEME

Possible Chair: Kathleen Jagger

Partnerships are absolutely key to the success of UBCO. One set of partnerships are those we foster in the community: industry, community groups, non-governmental organizations, government and so on. We will need to set priorities and also ways of working with these partners.

Mandate:

Referring to the UBC vision and our own experience, this theme will focus on the cross-cutting topics (technology, student experience, faculty/staff, disciplinary/interdisciplinary; review

mechanisms; space requirements), ideas from the University Circles and the Ideabook, as well as the following questions as a start for exploration:

- Who are our various partners now and what are our relationships with them? What is working well and what is not? Where are the gaps?
- How can we continue to work closely with the Okanagan Partnerships?
- The Interior Health Authority is an important partner – how can we ensure this partnership is a success?
- How do we engage the Okanagan Valley citizenry in caring more about what happens in the post-secondary system?
- What about continuing studies? What makes the most sense for UBCO in terms of target audiences and programs?
- What about student experiences in the community: co-op, internships, learning exchange, service learning and so on?

ACADEMIC RELATIONSHIPS THEME

Possible Chair: David Scott

While the previous theme handles external community-based relationships, this theme focuses on academic relationships, both local and global. How should we relate to UBC Vancouver? How should we relate to the New Okanagan College? What should our global partnerships look like?

Mandate:

Referring to the UBC vision and our own experience, this theme will focus on the cross-cutting topics (technology, student experience, faculty/staff, disciplinary/interdisciplinary; review mechanisms; space requirements), ideas from the University Circles and the Ideabook, as well as the following questions as a start for exploration:

- What parts of the UBCV academic plan make sense for us to adopt for UBCO? What should our relationship and partnership be “academically” with UBCV? What are the win-win situations for both campuses?
- New Okanagan College is an important partner for UBCO. We will have university transfer programs? What are the possibilities of partnerships on other laddering programs? Existing ones? New ones?
- What about global partnerships and the international perspective for UBCO? System-wide global partnerships will be available to UBCO students? In what way are we going to respond to the UBC vision for global citizenship in our students? How is a global perspective going to be part of UBCO?

3. APWG TERMS OF REFERENCE

ONE GREAT UNIVERSITY: The Academic Plan for UBC Okanagan should acknowledge its role as one of the campuses of The University of British Columbia (the system) in Canada and the world. The features that distinguish this province and UBC system from the rest of Canada and North America include:

- The TREK 2010 vision and its diverse ideas;
- The traditional provincial resource and commodity economy and the vital need to shift toward a knowledge-based economy where the role of the University becomes central;
- Our location on the Pacific Rim and our rich interactions with the Asia Pacific region;
- The diversity of Aboriginal peoples and the pending impact of new treaties;
- The multi-cultural nature of British Columbia society and of the University;
- The leadership and innovator roles that the University of British Columbia does and should play in post-secondary education in BC, in Canada, and indeed globally.

TWO GREAT CAMPUSES: the Academic Plan for UBC Okanagan, however, should do the following (from the President's presentation for discussion):

- Create distinctive an undergraduate, research-led, learning environment focused on the preparation of exceptional global citizens;
- Capitalize on the advantages associated with its small size in terms of creating a unique and excellent learning experience;
- Build upon excellence of OUC learning environment;
- Strengthen learning through a unique residential experience;
- Link to community and regional college campuses;
- Become the campus of choice for outstanding undergraduate students and select graduate students;
- Focus research strengths on needs of the region and broader community; and,
- Promote the values of a civil and sustainable society.

It is against these backdrops of changing context and the distinctiveness of this province and this Academic Plan will be crafted.

The Academic Plan Working Group (~50 members) will meet every two weeks to keep process on track and guide the development of the various drafts; a core team of the APWG would meet weekly. The Core Team is made up of the "chairs" of the 5 themes plus two "wild cards" and a Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair will report regularly to the Academic Advisory Council. The Vision Secretariats meet monthly in Sept, Oct, Nov for input into Plan.

Core Team:

Chair: Moura Quayle

Vice-Chair: Phil Beckmann

Wild Cards: Bob Belton and Bernie Bauer

Research Intensification Theme Chair: Cynthia Mathieson

Campus Learning Environment Theme Chair: Stephen Foster

Innovation: Tradition Theme Chair: Blane Despres

Community Relationships Theme Chair: TBA

Academic Relationships Theme Chair: David Scott

Responsibilities of Core Team Members:

Core Team members are expected to attend weekly meetings and report out at the APWG meetings as to the progress in their various theme areas. The Theme leaders are responsible to provide leadership for their themes, set meetings and produce written documentation of progress. The theme leaders will be responsible for the content of their "chapters" of the Academic Plan.

Responsibilities of Committee Members

Working group members are accepting a range of responsibilities by agreeing to serve on The Academic Plan Advisory Committee. The Academic Plan working Group will consult widely across the UBCO and the Community

We make these explicit here to clarify at the outset the expectations relating to committee member participation:

1. Represent the interests of the UBCO or NOC learning community as a whole, not the interests of specific units or constituencies;
2. Consult widely and share questions broadly and freely within the university and outside as well;
3. Be as creative and forward looking as possible to help guide the academic enterprise well into the next century;

4. Meet the deadlines and answer the questions set out in the forthcoming Academic Plan Workbook; and,
5. Attend bi-weekly (twice a month) meetings.

4. ACADEMIC PLAN TIMELINE AND MEETING DATES

The Academic Plan Working Group (APWG) is open to all members of the campus community. Seven meetings are planned for Fall 2004, as follows:

APWG: working sessions open to all members of campus community

Thursday Sept 9	10:00-11:30
Wednesday Sept 22	12:00-1:30
Tuesday Oct 5	7:30-9:00am
Wednesday Oct 20	12:00-1:30
Thursday Nov 4	7:30-9:00am
Thursday Nov 18	12:00-1:30
Thursday Dec 2	7:30-9:00am

Location of meetings TBA: check website

There will also be three campus-wide fora to engage as wide a community and to give us deadlines for making progress reports in the form of written drafts of the plan, getting more and more detailed as we progress.

Forum: Progress Reporting Sessions to students, faculty & staff

Tuesday Oct 19	3:30-5:00
Thursday Nov 25	12:00-1:30

Location of Fora TBA: check website

ACADEMIC PLAN WEB SITE:

<http://www.okanagan.ubc.ca/transition/input/index.html>.