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Draft Working Paper: **Academic Plan Issues**

The list of issues originates from multiple discussions of the Academic Plan Committee, discussions with the faculties, academic and administrative service groups, the integrated planning committee, the Senate planning and priorities committee and with three groups of community leaders.

*Many pages of comments from dozens of people have been analyzed, and **25** issues have been identified for discussion. Discussion points recorded from the consultations are listed under each issue; they are as comprehensive as possible; they should be interpreted as place-holders to continue the discussion, rather than as conclusive statements. Additionally, there may be issues that should be identified separately and/or additional issues that may still be identified.*

Consideration has already been given to some of these issues. The committee is asked to deliberate the issues over the next two months and formulate recommendations and a corresponding prioritized phased implementation sequence. The discussion of the issues, the recommendations and the implementation sequence will together form the Academic Plan. The presentation of these issues does may correspond exactly to the draft Table of Contents at this time.

A: INTRODUCTION

1 What is our Vision?

- Build a culture collegiality with a focus on what is best for the institution as a whole entity, not on individual activities in isolation
- Communicate our vision and profile our role to the community to ensure survival
- Don't want to be a liberal arts model
- one size cant fit all, non-discipline based activities are acceptable
- not a big research institution inventing new knowledge model supported by undergraduates
- VIU has a broader mandate: we are a trades school, college and university; develop a structure recognized by the academy but not exactly the same
- We want to be something that combines the best of both with direct relevance engagement with the community we serve. Need to provide education for global citizenship, with a global perspective, not a silo perspective

2. What should be preserved?

- Innovation, cross departmental collegiality, personal scale. People have chosen to work here because of the degree of interaction. Competitiveness associated with typical reward and recognition systems has been avoided.
- It's the track record in undergraduate programs that makes us unique, not bits and pieces of research - what about trades programs then?
- What is best for the students?

3. What is included?

- What lies in the realm of academic plan? Governance program array, quality, standards and qualifications?

4. What isn't included?

- What lies in the role of collective bargaining? Salary, expectations, employment conditions?

B: THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

5. What kind of Learning Experience will VIU provide?

- What should the learning experience look like?
- Add to the draft working paper to include many kinds of learning: program, incidental, by example, by modeling, by campus environment, by diversity and by exposure to differences
- Interaction with people is the biggest single factor affecting the quality of the educational experience
- Is personal contact with students is the most important determinant of the impact of educational experience?
- Who are the teachers? Traditional instructional faculty? Non-traditional instructional faculty? Non-instructional faculty? Students themselves?
- Education happens in the classroom and beyond the classroom
- Is some integrative experience necessary to build a sense of unity and institutional identity?
- The challenge of many different groups of students with different needs and goals: what integration is possible? What common identity?
- What topics should/do all students have in common? Should there be a core first year experience?
- Does a focus on specific issues conflict with academic freedom, learning for learning's sake, and the development of cultural and intellectual capital?
- Can a thematic focus be encouraged, mandated?

6. What Range of Educational Choices will VIU Offer?

- What does comprehensive mean? The presence of ABE, 1st and 2 year transfer, certificate, diplomas, bachelors, masters programs?
- Will VIU be able to offer all these? In what proportion?
- Can diversity leads to weaknesses, vacuums, restrictions, lack of opportunities, poor quality?
- Quality programs are instrumental in attracting good people and building a strong reputation

7. What is the VIU Commitment to Access and Success?

- What does an open access institution mean?
- Is this commitment a commitment to access for anyone, retention, quality of student performance and program completion?
- What are expectations of student literacy: re academic, writing, enumerative skills?
- What level of students are we teaching to - the brightest, the average, the lowest?
- Will we relax student standards when program #s are down? How does relaxing standards affect chances of student success?
- At what level does access begin? Dual credit high school programs?
- What are mechanisms to facilitate access to the University?
- How can we balance wide access with programs of integrity and quality?
- What is (Internal) access across programs?
- “Comprehensive” programs with many access points does not guarantee there is mobility between programs
- There is a perception of mobility due to the notion of one stop access points
- How many entry, laddering, bridging, professional development, and exit points can there be? Does the model really work? Is the focus really on students?
- What are the current obstacles to student mobility and program flexibility?
- There are 60 small departments, too many silos, with not enough focus on the basics, not enough cross disciplinary connections; a process is needed for moving through the programs
- What mechanisms facilitate access across programs?

C: THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

8. What are Academic Values?

- Inclusivity: Respect for indigenous knowledge (?)
- Academic Freedom
- Ethics and Integrity
- Citizenship (collegiality, participation)

- Quality (academic excellence, standards, professional development qualifications, currency, balance of generalization vs. specialization, program outcomes)
- Recognition: (rank, title, tenure, seniority)
- Accountability: peer review, evaluation processes

9. What is our Model of Scholarship?

Boyer: "What we urgently need today is a more inclusive view of what it means to be a scholar- recognition that knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice, and through teaching."

- **Teaching and learning (the primary activity)**
- **Discovery and research**
- **Application and practice (community engagement)**
- **Integration**

Teaching and learning

- Traditional indigenous
- Face to face
- Applied cut real hair habitat for humanity, culinary makes 70% of food, fix real cars
- Experiential
- What is the role and potential of technology enhanced learning curriculum
- What is the role and potential of on line learning?
- Role and potential of teaching assistants
- Role of Teaching and Learning Centre in face of changing culture, pedagogical methodology, modes of delivery
- Maximize efficiencies using central library and it services

Research and Discovery

- Needs a process for evaluating proposals- institutional relevance? Promise of \$?
- What kinds of research? Traditional? Applied, action, community based?
- Traditional research might be done anywhere, but may still be directly and indirectly relevant to the community
- Most undergraduates are involved in some kind of action research
- There are post doctoral students in the genomics lab

- Interdisciplinary research support is difficult to fund
- Don't set up objectives in graduate study and research that detract from central teaching mission
- Avoid having faculty who do not teach; students must have contact with experienced faculty

Application and Community Engagement:

- What is the scope of community engagement? Degree programs, vocational programs, career development programs, recreational and leisure programs?

Integration

- Refer to section in interdisciplinary activities (?)

10. Scope of and Support for External Activities

- What s the scope of fundraising, consultation, entrepreneurship?
- We currently have limited opportunities for implementation of new initiatives
- How do you evaluate proposals to identify which ideas will make money, save money, redirect money, provide funding application support
- What are liability implications, start-up enterprise development costs, capital costs, operating costs?
- Contract activity must be self sustainable, stimulate innovation, have measureable results - Industry collaborations, investor identification and partnerships
- What are implications of IP Protection and Evaluation
- What are the issues involved with technology marketing and licensing, patent drafting, filing and management, intellectual property rights, material transfer agreements etc.

11. Scope of and Support for Professional Development

- Professional development is required to prepare for an evaluation process; faculties don't know how the culture works. Danger of a rank and title system: people can avoid responsibilities
- Professional development policies for faculty: what is the balance between on campus hours, office hours, student contact hours and professional development time? Workload expectations, class sizes?
- Scope required of teaching and learning centre?

12. Rank, Title, Reward and Recognition (incl. seniority/tenure)

- Peer review needed on an ongoing basis to maintain quality and promote professional development
- Secondly, it will build our credibility with educational institutions
- Its contradictory with seniority system
- What ranks and titles?
- There is no reward or penalty for high performance
- Should there be cyclical faculty self assessment and goal setting with peer review, including external peers?
- What is role of release time? Should chair and release time be applied to clusters, not departments
- Need a home grown merit based rank and title system, a hybrid that preserves positive aspects of culture and introduces credibility at university level;
- Will there be tenure/seniority/ tenure track and non tenure track? A typical tenure track evaluation process?
- What faculty categories exist now: research associate, visiting professor, adjunct, university-college professor?
- How can major differences in workload and expectations be dealt with?
- Practice components make for heavier workload whereas formula for others is 12 classroom hours a week and supervision of student work
- Inequities between hours of work and expectations; Can there be equality between trades and academic faculty members, in workload and compensation?
- Downsides of rank and tenure; Faculty usually can't teach in other departments. Structures can preclude cross-departmental collaboration, research, emergence of new disciplines

13. What is the Strategy for introducing a new model of rank and recognition?

- Is there a flexible model that would be common to all VIU teaching scenarios?
- Could two models be run simultaneously throughout a transition period?
- New model must be tied to rewards and workplace conditions, or why would anyone do it?

14. Composition:

- Which groups would the model of scholarship and its approaches to interpretation cause to be included as faculty members?

- Can facilitation of student program navigation and engagement be considered a form of the scholarship of community engagement? Should advising staff be considered faculty members?
- Is the possession of traditional ways of knowing and learning a form of the scholarship? (elders in residence part of teaching faculty)
- What is the status of ESL instructors? No academic decision making is required from ESL
- What are the criteria for non-instructional faculty?

15. What is the Role of the Deans?

- Do the Deans represent the administration in the organizational components?
- Do they represent the faculty in the administrative dialogue?
- U Act says deans are members of the faculty but not faculty members
- Ongoing administrative lifers (Cont Ed, Trades and Applied Technology), only faculty members by virtue of their position
- Deans from Faculty- administrative roles but retain seniority as faculty (HHS, ARTS, H and S Sciences), 2 five year terms, then back to faculty position
- New deans with two 5 year term appointments (International, Science), then they go into faculty positions
- Should new deans always be external appointees?
- Should deans have retreat rights i.e. go back to faculty and retain seniority?

16. What is the Role of (Regional) Principals?

- What is the rationale for regional principals?
- Is this position a management position or a faculty position?
- Should the positions be reassigned to partner interfaces, building functions, external affairs?

D: ACTIVITIES

17. What is the optimal Organizational Structure?

- Does the current system make sense?
- Are there distinct groups of activities with common profiles?
- Are there natural faculty affiliations i.e. HHS, Social Sciences and Education? Science and Trades and Applied Sciences?
- Should there be a separate Trades School or College, International College? Continuing Studies?
- What defines a faculty? What can be done about systemic inequities re faculty sizes?
- Do faculties have to have distinct disciplines?

- How many faculties?
- How many professional schools?
- What defines a graduate program?
- Should there be a faculty of graduate studies?
- What defines a department?
- What happens when there are too many departments?
- What programs are in the wrong faculty: i.e.: philosophy and liberal studies not in arts and humanities but in social sciences (?) Should the MBA program be in a single faculty (now in International and Management)? Should forestry and horticulture stay in Science or move to Trades. Global studies is in Social Sciences, International Business is in Management, Global studies is in Social Sciences, Others?
- What programs need to be developed?
- What programs need to be discontinued?

18. What is the Scope of Interdisciplinary Activity?

General

- Should there be a faculty of interdisciplinary studies?
- Should there be an interdisciplinary credential?
- Should VIU set up a program structure that has a few interdisciplinary studies, not completing programs
- Do you build it or let it happen organically?
- How can workload limitations be changed to allow cross disciplinary work?
- You want cross fertilization. Promote integration pieces
- What are focuses, incentives, barriers for programs that cut across faculties?
- How do you hold onto practical conventions?
- If you formally recognize it, then it becomes a self selecting option
- Its more about removing barriers
- Interdisciplinary activity can be privileged or demeaned
- Need a mechanism to develop concepts/programs
- Innovative programs require faculty from traditional programs
- Which programs might be interdisciplinary and cut across faculties:

Aboriginal Culture and History

- First Nations studies is a department in arts and humanities; aboriginal students are not generally interested in aboriginal studies they want to do pursue all kind of programs
- Is the intention to provide programs exclusively to the aboriginal community, or to support aboriginal students across the whole range of programs?

- What initiatives were identified and funded under the Aboriginal Service Plan?
- Is the intention to ensure that all VIU programs make reference to First Nations knowledge, traditions, and history? How will this happen?

Sustainability

- Is the intention that all VIU students are exposed to Is the intention to ensure that all VIU programs make reference to concepts and applications involved with sustainability? How will this happen?

Global Awareness

- Faculty of International Studies is the faculty of international studies in Canada
- But it has no disciplines; will there be specific programs to this faculty?
- It has two departments: the international high school and the ESL program?
- Need to reflect an international perspective in all faculties, or have all activities based in this faculty?
- Why does international program subsidize other programs? Is this global citizenship?
- Why do we bring international students? To make money? In order to...?

Potential Clusters

- Fish and Wildlife Biology, Fisheries, Natural Resources
- Social Issues: Anthropology, Sociology, Human Services, Child and Youth Care
- Cultural Studies: History, English, Languages

E: PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

19. What Planning Processes must be in Place?

- Should program planning evaluate the whole spectrum, not just individual pieces?
- What are primary priorities? Need a definition of core educational culture and curriculum
- What is the mechanism to assess emerging program priorities?
- What is the mechanism to unwind and shut down a program?
- Need a secession plan to deal with faculty recruitment
- Should there be an enrollment planning cycle to establish 3 year capacity, targets and delivery by department, faculty and campus?
- Do we need more investment in recruitment and retention in multi-year and credit programming
- What are criteria for expansion, contraction? How does this relate to funding?
- Challenge programs on basis on **enrollment**: ie: comp science, geology/earth science/engineering 2nd, others
- Need a plan and strategies for graduate studies, MA and Phd,
- Challenge others on basis of **relevance**

- Can you ensure that programs are relevant? How do you decide what is of benefit to the community? How do you know what programs are wanted by constituents?

20. What is the Program Array? (Addresses potential components of the array, not scope of those components)

21. What Credentials will be awarded?

- What are terminal degrees: journeyman in Trades, PhD in Arts and Sciences, MFA in fine arts etc.?
- Are we going to move away from 2 year transfer programs to programs with degrees?
- Which programs are credit programs? Which are not?
- Certificate: a minimum of 300 hours of instruction, normally completed in one year of less of full time study with a minimum overall grade average of C (3.0)
- Diploma: a minimum of 60 credits in courses, normally equivalent to two years of full-time study, a minimum overall grade average of C (3.0)
- Certificate of course completion: in exceptional circumstances a certificate may be provided, with approval from the relevant Dean, to recognize completion of any individual credit course completed with a minimum of C
- Associate degree: a minimum of 60 credits of university program courses adhering to the requirements set by the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer, with a minimum grade of C in each course
- Advanced diploma; is awarded following an addition year of study after graduation from a two year diploma program with a specified grade point average
- Baccalaureate Degree: a minimum of 1`29 credits of an approved university-level course work with a specified minimum grade point average
- Post- degree diploma: an entrance requirement of a specified degree, or its equivalent, plus a minimum of 15 credits of a post-degree course, with a specified minimum grade point average
- Masters degree: completion of an approved graduate level program

22. What are the mechanisms for Quality Control and Assessment?

- All programs are subject to University policy on Admission, Registration and other Academic Regulations
- All programs have a codified matrix of required and optional courses designed to provide a cohesive set of skills and knowledge
- There is currently no central plan, no way to measure performance, progress, minimal accountability

- Should there be a complete review of undergraduate programs, with agreed upon outcomes shared by all programs, customized for some
- What is the role of accepted standards?
- Should we aggregate program results to identify institutional capacity and efficiency?
- A system of evaluation (with clearly stated minimum standards which may include attendance and participation) is used to assess student achievement and assign either letter or passing grades
- Institute performance incentives and disincentives
- What are the problems and opportunities associated with laddering?
- If access is really important, then programs educating early childhood educators should be front and center
- Our laddering opportunities from trades are not as good as other institutions- how can our learning outcomes be modified to ladder into academic programs. Last 2 years cant be totally different from first two years.
- A standardized, conventional universal GPA and credit system is required
- What are desired outcomes for all programs? What are program specific outcomes
- Define outcomes assessment: avoid accrediting bodies, standardized tests by defining what students learn and measuring it- doing it yourself first

23. What is the Sustainable Program Delivery Model?

- Does the current model serve faculty, students, program quality, fiscal reality?
- Small classes=low cost=socially responsible??=high quality??=high cost. IS THIS ACCURATE?
- Structural deficits and inflation must be addressed, and money must be found for reinvestment in the institutional infrastructure
- What is the model that will allow us to deliver our target FTEs and be fiscal sustainable?
- Can we revise the model: increase class sizes, increase capacity and FTE throughput, get more funding, avoid waiting lists, reduce tuition, pay faculty more, teach content once not multiple times, and restructure assignments and exams?
- Program model can't be written in stone; its must be flexible, and sustainable and accommodate what we want to do to what resources we have and continually readjust
- Strategies must be consistent with resources: what are we going to stop doing in order to address others things better?
- What is role of tuition dependent programs? Increasing tuition revenue?
- Should there be separate regional academic plans? Or just one plan?
- What is VIU capacity?
- We aren't delivering what we are funded for in core programs, only 85-90%

- If we aren't delivering all our funded FTEs, where are the empty places? In which programs? What programs are full with waitlists?
- Should recruitment be tied into targeted areas?
- What integration and efficiency can be found in program clusters?
- There are different funding models: MAVED is a block of funds that can be transferred, but ITA comes class by class
- Different models may operate simultaneously
- There are 11 month, two-semester operation, and year round programs- what operational integration is possible?

- Components and variables involved in a delivery model
 - **program array**
 - social needs
 - number of programs
 - mix of program types
 - # of access points
 - proportion of face to face, online, experiential learning
 - **funding**
 - operating funding
 - revenue generation through contract work
 - tuition: are fee structure realistic?
 - **quality**
 - admissions standards
 - academic excellence: identified outcomes
 - balance between general and specific programs
 - **metrics**
 - workload expectations
 - #of faculty and staff required
 - # of students
 - class sizes
 - **resources**
 - available infrastructure
 - schedule availability
 - utilization targets
- **Which factors offer the most opportunity for both quality and efficiency?**
- Who is responsible for managing the program model(s)?
- What is the role of faculties in managing the model?
- What is the role of student services in managing the model? Are they determiners or responders?

F: SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

24. What are the implications for Academic Support Services?

Student Services

- Is the name accurate?
- What proportion of the work is marketing, student development, program interpretation, decision support?

Library Services

- Will the library have its own plan?

Teaching and Learning Centre

- Enhance activity to develop appropriate learning centered values and competencies and expertise

Educational Planning

- What current planning processes: ie Signpost and the annual Accountability Plan must be integrated and/or modified in emerging planning procedures and cycles?
- How will educational planning be integrated with ongoing integrated planning at the institutional level?

Research Services

- What is the risk if there is no infrastructure to support research services? What opportunities might be lost?
- Do we need a need a VIU press?
- How can we create funding for research institutes?
- What incentives must be provided?
- Should there be base funding for internal grants for faculty research?
- Increase funds for student lead research projects
- Need start up support for research centers to pursue research grants
- Getting to sources of major funding is a huge challenge - what is the mechanism?
- We need an institutional budget to support master programs: i.e. ethics, animal care and human subjects policies and procedures
- Need large scale investment in faculty and student teaching and research, faculty release time for research, definition of research, scholarly activity

25. What are the implications for Administrative Support Services?

- How will educational planning be integrated with ongoing integrated planning at the institutional level?
- How will a culture of integrated progressive management, that requires new administrative procedures, organizational concepts, and management skills be developed at VIU?
- Programs have been added without corresponding service support
- There is no student centre or faculty centre
- Are there enough facilities for larger classes?
- Need large scale investment in digital infrastructure, capital projects?

- Many facilities upgrades are needed
- There is not a strong enough relationship between space planning and teaching methodology
- Is the goal to get maximum utilization of facilities? How many hours in the day? Days in the weeks? Program delivery model is 9 months? A year-long trimester system?
- Research kitchen is a multi-million dollar facility that needs a strategic plan
- Require adequate investment in core facilities, student services, other institutional programs, no risk management, internal audit
- Clarification of all administrative structures and goals is required