

Research, Scholarship, and Professional Activity

at

Malaspina University-College:

A Year 2000 Update

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(ii)

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Summary of Recommendations

1. **That the Malaspina Executive issue a clear statement of the direction and goals envisioned for Research, Scholarship and Professional Activity in the coming few years.**
2. **That the title *Vice-President, Instruction* be changed to *Vice President, Instruction, Research and Scholarship*.**
3. **That a central Office of Research and Scholarship (ORS) be established, by September, 2000.**
4. **That a Research and Scholarship Committee be struck, consisting of five faculty representatives, the Research Officer, and the V.P. Instruction, Research and Scholarship (Chair).**
5. **That in the coming five years an attempt be made to increase the number of assisted leaves incrementally each year.**
6. **That departments investigate the possibility of partnerships with external academic or professional non-profit organizations, possibly to be housed on campus.**
7. **That some release time from teaching be provided for faculty who have demonstrated a successful record of research and professional activity, and submit a proposal for future work.**
8. **That Deans encourage the implementation of Faculty or Departmental seminars.**
9. **That the *Research and Development* page on the Malaspina web site be revisited.**
10. **That *Mainly Malaspina* continue its current column, "Malaspina People", for general-interest and social items, and add another, say, "Malaspina Research, Scholarship, and Professional News".**

Research, Scholarship, and Professional Activity at

Malaspina University-College

1. Introduction

This Report has been prepared in response to a request from Dr. David Thomas, Vice-President of Instruction at Malaspina. It should be read as an addition to the Report of the widely representative *Research Support Working Group* (RSWG) report, presented to the Executive in January, 1999 (Appendix I). There are two justifications for this additional report: firstly, to account for the many changes and additional activities which have taken place over the past thirteen months, and secondly, to expand the subject from the restrictively defined “research” of the earlier report. Thus, “Research, Scholarship, and Professional Activity” in the present report encompasses a wide range of endeavours in which many faculty members at Malaspina are involved.

The RSWG report considered the mandate and the value (or necessity) of research in the university colleges, and that discussion will not be repeated at length here. Malaspina and the other B.C. University-Colleges are, and will remain, institutions focused on teaching, learning, and service to the community. Faculty and students are involved in research and other forms of scholarship and professional activity because they sharpen that focus. The evolution of the university colleges into autonomous degree-granting institutions demands that research, scholarship, and professional work be supported as essential to that mandate, and not viewed as extracurricular activities.

In the past year a climate favourable to the conduct of academic and professional activity has continued to evolve at Malaspina and its sister institutions. The University-College Consortium is actively lobbying for changes in the approach of the B.C. Government to the University Colleges. This effort is critical, as the current provincial position, as set out in *Charting a New Course* and in the legislation of Bill 22, scarcely mentions research, scholarship, or professional activity. The first annual *B.C. University College Research Conference* was held in Kamloops in May, and was attended by several instructors and administrators from Malaspina. This year’s conference will be held in Nanaimo on May 10-12. A survey to examine faculty perceptions of scholarly activity, and funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant, is being conducted this spring; questionnaires will be sent to faculty at the five B.C. university colleges and the University College of Cape Breton. At Malaspina, discussions are underway that will see the introduction of peer review, and the consideration of research, scholarship and professional activity in the evaluation of faculty. Finally, the success of faculty and students is growing, as evidenced at Malaspina by recent departmental initiatives and faculty publications (section 6), as well as the external contracts and grants received (Appendix II).

2. What is Research, Scholarship, and Professional Activity?

The Malaspina Education Council adopted a *Research and Scholarly Activity Policy* in April, 1997 (Appendix III), that lists a wide range of activities. To formulate a succinct definition is not an easy task, but it is important, for the purpose of discussion, to establish criteria that include some activities and exclude others. For the purposes of this report, a simple definition is proposed:

Appropriate research, scholarship, and professional activity consists of contributions by a faculty member to his/her discipline or profession resulting in the presentation of work for formal or informal peer or public review outside the institution.

There are two comments further to this definition. Firstly, as Malaspina is a teaching institution, every instructor should be concerned with the processes of teaching and learning. Some will choose to become actively involved in the scholarship of examining these processes, and submitting this scholarship for external comment and review. Thus the *teaching and learning process* itself must be considered an appropriate field of scholarship for all instructors. Secondly, we must include scholarship that is *interdisciplinary*; one of the strengths of Malaspina is the ease with which cross-disciplinary scholarship can, and does, take place.

Research, scholarship, and professional activity so defined is much broader than the “research” traditionally used at universities to evaluate faculty for promotion and tenure. It encompasses not only *discovery* research, or the creation of new knowledge, but also work that focuses on the *application* of knowledge, and the *integration* of knowledge that is traditionally a part of separate disciplines.

A similar expansion of the traditional understanding of university research to include the application and integration of knowledge, and the scholarship of teaching and learning, has been championed by Boyer and others at the Carnegie Foundation of the Advancement of Teaching, and is outlined in a recent booklet by Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff.¹ This interesting essay examines not only the nature of university scholarship, but how it can be appropriately included in the evaluation of faculty.

While the narrow model of research is being challenged at the universities, the comprehensive mandate of the university-colleges demands a broader outlook still. With degree programs in the natural sciences, arts, social sciences, education, health and human services, and recreation and tourism, as well as technology and business diplomas and vocational programs, a wide range of faculty academic and professional activity must be anticipated.

Similarly, the presentations of research or professional activity will also be more varied than those traditionally accepted by the universities. For example, in addition to publication in peer-reviewed journals and books, we would include publication in the “grey” literature, such as reports to companies, government agencies, or community groups, as well as conference presentations, musical performances, and art exhibitions. Although documenting the extent and quality of such diverse forms of peer or public review may prove to be challenging, these are the appropriate outlets for the activities that should and do play an important role at a university college. Whatever form the presentation takes, if a contribution to a field of knowledge is to result, it is essential that it be made available for peer or public review.

If we adopt the above definition, research and scholarship will not include college or community work in areas outside of the faculty member’s field, with the two qualifications noted above. Also excluded are the preparation of classes, reading of books and journals, and attendance at lectures, conferences or seminars. Such activities are valuable and necessary for an instructor to stay current in his or her field, and relevant to his or her students. Without this professional development, a faculty member will not find success in teaching, or in research and scholarship, or in professional activity. The criterion of dissemination beyond the classroom ensures that the results of this scholarship can contribute to the field of study or profession, the reputation of the institution, and the benefit of its students.

The university-college system should be wary of attempting to place limits on the kinds of research that are to be accepted. For example, it has been suggested that these institutions should restrict themselves to “applied” and “regional” research. Research will be channeled into those areas in which it can feasibly be accomplished, and these will often be applied or regional because these fit well with many university-college programs. But some good “basic” research can and is being carried out in these institutions, and should not be discouraged.

Ultimately, the judgment of what constitutes appropriate and valuable research and scholarship will lie within (or between) the disciplines. We should expect to find considerably different criteria in the departments, for example, of physics and music, philosophy and business, or nursing and fine art.

3. Evaluation

Accepting the presentation of work for peer or public review as the hallmark of scholarly or professional work is important if the success of that activity is to be documented and evaluated. Faculty and administrators at Malaspina have embarked on the difficult task of agreeing on the level of research, scholarship, and professional activity to be expected of faculty members, and the equally difficult tasks of documenting and evaluating it. Further, the ultimate use of this evaluation must be determined.

In preparation for these discussions, the Malaspina Scholarly Activity Subcommittee has recently produced a draft document² “(a) to clarify faculty responsibilities, especially in the areas of scholarship and service, and (b) to provide a process for periodic evaluations that allows for an element of peer review in areas like scholarship and service.” The intent of this draft is “to provide a way of framing the issues and to help develop an institutional consensus.” A central theme is that *successful* scholarly and professional activity is an obligation of all faculty members, and is particularly essential for those who are provided with upper-division scholarly release from teaching. Further, “contributions to one’s field are contributions only if they are publicly disseminated and evaluated.”

It is important that these negotiations move ahead quickly, but with sensitivity and awareness of the importance of their outcome.

4. Recognition and Support

The evaluation of the academic and professional success of faculty, and the application of this evaluation raise issues that can only be settled by contractual negotiations. However, a climate that encourages and supports these activities may be cultivated by other means. There is much to be done, by administrators and faculty alike, to reinforce the perception that research, scholarship, and professional activities are not only accepted but encouraged at Malaspina, and seen as necessary components of the teaching and learning mandate.

An explicit assurance, from the Malaspina board and senior administrators, that academic and professional activities are a part of the mandate and mission of the institution will go a long way toward reinforcing this perception, even if such an assurance includes realistic constraints under which these activities must operate. Also, modes of communication that draw the attention of faculty to the successful activities of their colleagues will raise the profile of this enterprise.

More tangible support is also needed. Clearly, the institution cannot require or expect faculty activity that it is unable to support with adequate resources. According to most faculty members, the critical resource issue is time, and the counterpoint of heavy teaching workloads and time available for other academic and professional activities will be central to future discussions. While it seems unlikely that there will be any substantial decrease in overall teaching workloads in the near future, some elements of accommodation and support may be built up incrementally, if creative and flexible approaches can be adopted. Some progress in this regard has already been achieved, and other recommendations are included in section 7.

Malaspina has yet to provide an administrative or management structure specifically to support research and scholarly work. There is a clear need for some such assistance, as faculty are finding it difficult to initiate or maintain this work in the absence of any such aid.

Another critical issue is the requirement for physical infrastructure: the space and equipment needed for research. This is especially important in the sciences and technologies, where laboratory space is at a premium, and equipment is crucial for experimental research. Although most research of this kind is conducted with student participation, using shared teaching space and equipment, there is a shortage of both.

In summary, the development of a strong culture of research and professional activity at Malaspina will require action on many fronts. First of all, a redefinition of the mandate of the institution is needed. More tangible recognition in the form of time, administrative assistance, and infrastructure must also be forthcoming to support the many faculty members who have the expertise and commitment to carry this development forward. Some specific recommendations are to be found in section 7.

The long-standing university debate regarding the support and recognition of teaching *vs.* research is not really the issue here. The current practice of rewarding research rather than teaching at some universities has been damaging to the teaching and learning process, and there are moves afoot in many places to correct this imbalance by more explicitly recognizing teaching excellence. But at Malaspina, it is research, scholarship and professional activities that have had little or no recognition. In this regard, the university colleges and the universities are coming from opposite ends of the research/teaching continuum.

5. Recent Developments

In the past year, progress has been made on several fronts in the promotion and support of research, scholarship, and professional activity at Malaspina.

The announcement of the Malaspina Research Fund (MRF, Appendix IV), providing \$30,000 in 99/00 and \$60,000 in following years to provide start-up research grants to faculty, responds to one of the main recommendations of the RSWG report. This fund will provide support and incentive to faculty. Grants will be distributed competitively upon application to a central committee of peers. Progress and final reports, which will be made available to the university-college community, will be required of all grant recipients. A summary of the various internal sources of funding for scholarly activity, research, and professional development, including the MRF, has recently been published.³

Malaspina has increased the base library budget by \$250,000, starting in fiscal year 2000/01. This is a response to the broad consensus that although the library is able to serve the lower-division university programs well, its book and journal collections for upper-division work are inadequate in some areas. Although a university-college library should not be funded primarily as a research resource, the real needs of students and faculty must be met. A substantial part of the current Malaspina Foundation fund-raising drive is being committed to the capital and acquisition needs of the library. In addition, the Provincial government must be pressed to fulfill its obligation to provide a library service commensurate with an institution offering credible university degrees.

One of the major factors inhibiting research, scholarship, and professional activity by faculty is the lack of blocks of time. The 1999/2000 Malaspina Faculty Association collective agreement ensures that one day per week free of teaching duties will be provided for faculty who are teaching upper-division university courses and engaged in scholarly activity.⁴ Even with the high teaching workloads of the university college, faculty say that if a morning, an afternoon, or a complete day were more frequently scheduled without class assignments, productive scholarly work would be much more feasible.

The RSWG report recommended that instructors teaching upper-division university courses be able to bank the scholarly release time provided, in order to secure larger blocks of time for scholarly activity in the future. It also recommended that externally derived contract funds be carried over in a research account for the same purpose. Both of these recommendations have now been implemented. However, the banking of teaching overload time has not yet been achieved. Because this may incur additional costs to the institution, some restrictions should be placed on its application, for example, a commitment obtained from the faculty member that the time released from teaching in the future will be used for the pursuit of academic or professional work.

The current infrastructure budgets are inadequate in those areas that are strongly equipment and space dependent, such as science and technology, fine arts, physical education, nursing, and applied programs. This shortfall presents an extremely difficult situation for the teaching/learning process, as well as for experimental research. Successful research programs in these areas have, out of necessity, relied on external sources for equipment, but these sources are increasingly hard to tap. It is vital that all attempts be made, through external fund-raising and internal reallocation, to increase these infrastructure funds. A particularly bright light in this regard is the recent success of the Science and Technology faculty in accessing a substantial infrastructure grant from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (section 6). It is hoped that the newly announced fund-raising campaign of the Malaspina Foundation will partially focus on these critical infrastructure needs.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the Malaspina Executive has joined with administrators at its sister institutions to lobby for a change in the Provincial university-college legislation. It is clearly difficult to argue for the development of increased research and scholarly activity when this is not explicitly supported in the Provincial university-college mandate. More generally, the consortium is working to persuade the B.C. Ministry to recognize more fully the difference between university colleges and community colleges. But such change may be a long-term prospect. In an article in the current issue of *College Canada*⁵, Roger Elmes urges the university colleges to continue to strengthen their position by demonstrating successful activity within the current framework, despite its limitations. In Elmes' words, we should "just do it."

These several developments over the past year are positive signs, although much remains to be done. Faculty at Malaspina with the expertise and commitment to research and professional work are "just doing it", as the following examples indicate.

6. Current Activity

Faculty at Malaspina are variously occupied in publishing books, peer-reviewed papers in print and electronic format, and reports for private and government agencies. They are also writing short stories, poems, and plays, composing musical works, and showing their work in exhibitions. Others are editing scholarly journals, serving on executive committees of professional associations, or organizing academic conferences. Details of scholarly activity may be found in the faculty curricula vitae, available in the office of the Vice President, Instruction.

In addition to these individual efforts, groups of faculty members in several departments are pursuing scholarly and professional initiatives in a wide variety of directions. The following is a selection of some of these departmental initiatives.

1. Applied Environmental Research Laboratory

Researchers in the Faculty of Science and Technology have recently received funding approval for the Applied Environmental Research Laboratory (AERL) from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (\$250,000) and the Science Council of B.C. (\$100,000). The project also includes an industry contribution of nearly \$200,000 from MacMillan Bloedel (now Weyerhaeuser). Malaspina is the first university college in B.C. to receive funding approval from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, a national agency providing infrastructure to universities and institutions for the support of scientific research initiatives. Once completed, the AERL will represent an \$890,000 investment in new research equipment and infrastructure at Malaspina.

The new Laboratory will conduct pure and applied research related to innovations in environmental chemical analysis. The AERL will support a variety of new research initiatives with academic, government and private sector partners, and will involve students in several departments. Industry collaborations include a wide range of environmental projects, such as alternative silviculture practices, foliar and plant analysis, land use impacts, microbial ecology, soil/sediment analysis, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, and water quality analysis.

Principal investigators in the project are Drs. Chris Gill and Erik Krogh in the Malaspina Chemistry department, Dr. Max Bothwell of the National Water Research Institute, Bill Beese, Chief Forest Ecologist with Weyerhaeuser, Dr. Craig Stephen of the Centre for Coastal Health, and Dr. Matt Hoch in the Biology Department.

2. Rural Communities Research and Development Centre

The first two objectives of Malaspina's Rural Communities Research and Development (RCRD) Centre are to initiate, support, and pursue research into rural communities, and to promote multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary activity in such research. Since its inception in 1996, the Centre has hosted symposia and seminars on Rural Research, partnered with James Cook University to jointly offer an M.Ed. in Rural Studies, convened the last three annual conferences of the B.C. Rural Teachers' Association and published their annual journal, the *Rural Root*. The RCRD Centre is coordinated by Dr. Jim Montgomery, in the Department of Education, who works with research fellows from several Malaspina departments, as well as from the University of Calgary and James Cook University.

The Centre is sponsoring and organizing the international conference, *Rural Communities and Identities in the Global Millennium* to be held at Malaspina on May 1-5, 2000.

3. The Ralph Gustafson Chair of Poetry

The estate of the late Ralph Gustafson, one of Canada's pre-eminent poets, together with his widow, Betty Gustafson, have created a Trust to endow a Chair of Poetry at Malaspina, to advance Canadian poetry and support deserving poets. The Chair-holder interacts with faculty and students, gives readings and seminars, and is expected to spend some part of the assignment in the preparation of original works. The Trust is administered by an advisory board and steering committee.

The first holder of the Gustafson Chair, in 1999, was Patricia Young, and Susan Musgrave has been selected for the current year. Additional contributions to the endowment fund are being sought, with the goal of extending the term of the poet-in-residence to a full academic year. The contact for the fund is Stephen Guppy, in the department of Creative Writing and Journalism.

4. Health Infrastructure Support Research Project

The Centre for Coastal Health (CCH) in the Faculty of Science and Technology has received a grant of \$99,300 from the Health Infrastructure Support Program of Health Canada, one of only 30 grants provided nationally in this program. The goal of the Malaspina project is to develop an interactive web site that will serve as the communication foundation for a national network to look at animal and environmental health data, with the goal of detecting or predicting emerging human health risks. The project will be an important link between national programs in these areas. In addition to the CCH Director, Dr. Craig Stephen, the project involves Drs. Peter Walsh and Jim Uhl in the Computing Science department, Ms. Iris Churcher in the Art department, and a summer student.

5. Institute of Practical Philosophy

The Institute of Practical Philosophy represents a successful attempt to mesh the academic research and expertise of the university-college with the real concerns of the community. Functioning on a non-profit, cost-recovery basis since 1995, the Institute has sponsored many events and publications dealing with issues as diverse as medical ethics, euthanasia, crime and punishment, guardianship legislation, academic freedom, and human rights. The Institute currently sponsors a credit course in medical ethics, taught at the Nanaimo General Hospital, for students who are mostly health-service professionals.

Pornography and the Law, the fifth annual Social Justice symposium, will be held this year at Malaspina on March 18, and will investigate pornography, censorship, and free expression. Bob Lane, Philosophy department, is the Director of the Institute, and Dr. Robert Pepper-Smith is its Development Officer. Several Malaspina and community people act as research associates.

6. Centre for Heritage Management

The Centre for Heritage Management has recently been launched by Dr. Patrick Dunae in the History department. The objective of the Centre is to facilitate research, teaching, consultancy and community service in applied history and related fields of heritage resource management. The Centre will provide an opportunity for students and faculty to demonstrate their skills outside the academy. Malaspina is well positioned, by virtue of its geographic location and the resources and expertise available at the institution, to establish this Centre. Working in co-operation with the community, the Centre will provide skills and expertise to enhance the cultural and economic development of the region.

Dr. Dunae has developed two senior undergraduate courses in Applied History that will mesh well with the new Centre. History 480 (Introduction to Applied History) introduces the issues that inform historians who are employed in archives, museums, heritage organizations, government agencies and business corporations. History 481 (The Practice of Applied History) focuses on the skills used by public or applied historians. It is anticipated that students enrolled in these courses may undertake internships under the auspices of the Centre for Heritage Management.

7. Belize River Water-Quality Assessment

Malaspina University-College and the University-College of Belize (UCB) are implementing the third year of a four-year project in Water-Quality Assessment. The project is sponsored by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, Canadian College Partnership Program, and has a four-year budget of \$330,000. The broad purpose of the project is to train UCB faculty and students in water-quality assessment techniques and to collaboratively establish a monitoring program on the Belize River to document baseline conditions and possibly identify specific perturbations to surface water quality.

The Belize River drains the largest watershed in Belize, Central America, and extends into Guatemala. Deterioration in water quality because of increased agriculture and settlement within the watershed threatens the growing eco-tourism industry, as well as the traditional and cultural use of the river by Creole and Maya peoples. Issues of concern include cultural eutrophication from sewage discharge and/or fertilizer use, sedimentation due to erosion of deforested riparian zones and tilled-soils, and loading of waterborne pathogens due to untreated sewage discharges. Until recently there has not been routine water quality monitoring of the Belize River.

Over the past year-and-a-half, the river has been monitored monthly at six stations from Belize City upstream to San Ignacio, as well as at 2 stations on the Mopan and Macal Rivers. The information gathered is expected to be used to make resource management decisions and policies in the future.

Dr. Matt Hoch, Biology department, manages the scientific aspects of the project with Dr. Ed van Zinderen Bakker and others. The project also involves several senior biology students each year, students who will have the skills for jobs in environmental impact assessment in government and non-government organizations, as well as for environmental education and the eco-tourism industry in tropical countries.

8. Invertebrate Aquaculture Research

Species diversification is an important key to the expansion of the aquaculture and commercial fishing industries in B.C., and invertebrate species are of special interest. In the Fisheries and Aquaculture department, students and faculty regularly undertake small research projects on behalf of industry, to solve specific problems encountered in bringing new invertebrate species into commercial culture. Typically, a company or government agency approaches the department with a problem and offers funding to cover supplies needed for the research study; experimental animals are frequently provided, and the companies have, in several cases, made large scholarship donations. A final report is provided to the sponsoring company or government ministry.

Examples of the above research include many juvenile geoduck studies and various projects involving two species of mussels, two species of sea urchins, spot prawns, varnish clams, and Manila clams. A recent contract with the commercial fishing industry and an aquaculture company studied the enhancement of sea urchin gonads, and government-supported projects have included the design of an identification key for cephalopods, as well as the age and maturation of varnish clams. Dr. Bill Pennell works with several other members of the department in this research.

9. B.C. Foster Care Education Program

Since November, 1998, faculty members of Malaspina's Child and Youth Care (CYC) and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) programs have been researching and writing the curriculum for the *B.C. Foster Care Education Program, Series I and II* - fourteen educational modules which are now required to be taken by all foster parents in B.C. In this contract with the B.C. Ministry of Children and Families, Malaspina, in partnership with Camosun College, is working with a provincial curriculum advisory/review committee to complete the curriculum. Funding for the program to date has been approximately \$60,000 and is being used to buy teaching release for the faculty members involved with the program. Final approval for the curriculum is expected later this year, although the modules in Series I are now being delivered to foster parents throughout B.C. John Rogerson is the Malaspina coordinator for the writing project, which involves five other CYC/ECEC faculty members. Leanne Rosse Sladde coordinates a separate contract for the delivery of the courses in the Malaspina region.

The Foster Parent contracts are examples of many that have been accepted or are being considered by the Human Services Area at Malaspina. Projects are accepted only if they promise to enhance, rather than detract from, the faculty's basic commitment to students. The research, development, and delivery of the Foster Parent curriculum is very closely aligned to content in Malaspina's CYC program.

10. Research Workshops for the Aquaculture Industry

For the past three years, the Malaspina Fisheries and Aquaculture Extension Program (FAEP) has, among many activities, organized an extremely successful series of research workshops for the Canadian aquaculture industry. This series is sponsored by the Mid-Island Science, Technology and Innovation Council, the National Research Council, and a Vancouver Island company, Island Scallops, Inc., in partnership with Malaspina. The workshops have brought together an international group of expert speakers and participants. The three applied-science topics ("Live Feed", "The Perfect Egg", and "Probiotic Solutions") have focused on issues of immediate concern to the aquaculture industry, and the series has earned a strong reputation for Malaspina and the department not only on Vancouver Island, but also nationally and internationally.

The Director of the FAEP is Dr. Erick Groot; who works closely with faculty in the Fisheries and Aquaculture department, particularly Linda Hiemstra, in organizing these workshops. Linda was chair of the *Aquaculture Canada 99* conference in Victoria, and is currently President of the Aquaculture Association of Canada. .

1999 also saw the inauguration of the Forestry Extension department (headed by Tom Hedekar) that is now providing research and education services to the professional forestry industry in Southwestern B.C. These two extension departments have combined their administrative forces to better serve the local fisheries/aquaculture/forestry industries, and, indirectly, Malaspina students.

11. Strait of Georgia Marine Conservation Feasibility Study

The Recreation and Tourism Research Institute (RTRI) was founded by Dr. Rick Rollins and his colleagues in the department of Recreation and Tourism at Malaspina in 1998. Over the past two years, several projects have been completed, and others are currently underway. These have included several surveys of festival events, and of tourism and recreation potentials, for municipalities on Vancouver Island.

Of particular interest is the feasibility study of the proposed "Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area", being carried out under a two-year contract with Parks Canada and coordinated by Darrel Mansbridge. This project includes documenting the existing infrastructure to support recreation and tourism activity in the study area, identifying and mapping the marine and beach activity, and surveying resident and non-resident users. The study is proceeding in parallel with related projects being carried out at the University of Victoria (UVic). In one of these, the RTRI has applied, in partnership with UVic, for SSHRC funding to support a study assessing the whale-watching industry in B.C.

12. Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre

The successful launch of the Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre in 1999 resulted in the visit of the navigator's first English-language biographer John Kendrick in April, and the symposium *Alexandro Malaspina: Enlightenment Thinker?* and the concurrent photography exhibit *Nootka: Return to a Forgotten History* in October. The symposium was attended by Alexandro Malaspina scholars from Canada, Spain, Italy and the United States, including representatives of the Spanish Senate and government. Dr. Alex and Ms. Doris Malaspina, key figures in the worldwide support of Alexandro Malaspina scholarship also attended. The Symposium papers will be published in chapbook form, and on the Centre website which is under development.

The publication of a translation into English of Dario Manfredi's biography of Alexandro Malaspina is currently underway, as is the establishment of an Alexandro Malaspina worldwide portal (in the domain malaspina.com), which will become the central clearing house for communication on all aspects of Alexandro Malaspina initiatives worldwide. The Centre was initiated by Drs. Russell McNeil (Director) and John Black in the Liberal Studies department; several faculty members in other departments act as associates.

7. Recommendations

In March, 1999, an Ethics and Development Sub-Committee at Malaspina discussed the recommendations of the RSWG report (Appendix V). The sub-committee agreed with each recommendation, with the reservation that the interpretation of "research" in that report was too narrow. Some of these recommendations have been accepted and implemented by the institution; others are currently being discussed. Some are repeated below in a slightly revised form.

The following recommendations fall into two categories. Some require little or no resource allocation, and might serve to foster a climate at Malaspina in which research, scholarship, and professional pursuits are encouraged and accepted more readily. Others are more tangible, and will require the (re)allocation of resources. It's hard to present such recommendations at a time when the University-College is again faced with serious budgetary constraints. But the implications of providing university-degree programs must be faced. Clearly, the implementation of some of these recommendations will demand open and extended discussion within the institution.

- 1. That the Malaspina Executive issue a clear statement of the direction and goals envisioned for Research, Scholarship and Professional Activity in the coming few years.** No explicit references to faculty research, scholarship, or professional pursuits are to be found in either Malaspina's Mission Statement or its Strategic Plan. An executive directive that included a *justification*, an *endorsement* and a *vision* of research, scholarship and professional activity would provide assurance to the Malaspina community. Included should be a clear articulation of the degree of support and the level of activity envisioned. Such a declaration, issued by the Executive after consultations with deans, other administrators, and faculty members, could subsequently be debated and perhaps modified by the Educational Council before being submitted for Board approval and inclusion in the Mission Statement. Lacking such a clear statement of direction, specific actions to support Research, Scholarship, and Professional Activity will be seen as *ad hoc* attempts to provide a band-aid solution to an undefined problem. Thus, the following recommendations should be conditional on, and consistent with, this statement.
- 2. That the title *Vice-President, Instruction* be changed to *Vice President, Instruction, Research and Scholarship*.** This, together with the statement of direction in the first recommendation above, would signal to the Malaspina community a commitment to research and scholarship. It would also provide a senior-level representative for negotiations at the provincial, national, and international levels. For example, negotiations will be taking place in the near future to confirm Malaspina's eligibility for the SSHRC and NSERC programs which are so necessary for our faculty and senior students. Similarly, the question of eligibility for the recently announced *21st Century Chairs for Research Excellence* program has yet to be settled. Malaspina should be represented at these discussions by the credible and strong voice of a senior executive member.
- 3. That a central Office of Research and Scholarship (ORS) be established, by September, 2000.** The RSWG report recommended that an Office of Research Services be considered; the above broader title may be preferred. In the thirteen months since that report, activity levels have increased in several departments, and there is a strong sense among faculty that such an office is needed now. The primary functions of the ORS would be to attract research funds, assist faculty with grant and contract applications, initiate research partnerships, and facilitate various administrative functions. A fuller description of the mission, objectives and functions of an ORS are summarized in Appendix 7 of the RSWG report (Attachment I).

The Technology Transfer Centre (TTC) is now performing some of the functions of an ORS at Malaspina. This Centre, funded by the Information, Science, Technology Association (ISTA) of the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, is mandated specifically to liaise between Malaspina faculty and regional industries to foster economic development in the science and technology sector. Although related, this is a not the function of an ORS, and the TTC cannot continue to fill both roles. The TTC and the Fisheries and Forestry Extension departments have recently come together in the Science and Technology Research and Extension office, to reduce their administrative and clerical overheads. This office, together with the Malaspina National Research Council (NRC) representative, have extensive off-campus contacts, and should be closely aligned with the ORS.

Although the ORS must work closely with these other players in the fields of science and technology, and may even occupy a nearby office, it is important that *it serve all departments in the institution*, and be seen to do so.

In addition to providing administrative assistance, the ORS should also take the initiative in proposing new directions and in forging new relationships with external partners. Initially, staffing will require either a full or half-time research officer, with strong writing skills and with extensive experience in research and in grantsmanship. The research officer should report directly to the Vice President, Instruction, Research and Scholarship. Skilled clerical assistance will be needed; this may best be contracted as required. The existing Science and Technology Research and Extension office may be able to provide this assistance, if funding is available.

In the longer term, it is possible that the ORS office will be self-sustaining from overheads charged to research contracts. However, this cannot be assumed, and initially funding should come from the Malaspina base budget. The University College of the Cariboo and Okanagan University College are each operating an ORS, and providing one full-time salary. The increased success of these two institutions in attracting external funding for research and scholarship suggests that this has been a wise investment.

One of the tasks of an ORS should be to investigate the research and scholarship policies that have been successful at small undergraduate institutions in Canada and in the United States. This will identify particular strategies at institutions that, with limited resources and without graduate programs, have established solid records of research and scholarship.

4. **That a Research and Scholarship Committee be struck, consisting of five faculty representatives, the Officer of the ORS, and the V.P. Instruction, Research and Scholarship (Chair).** The primary function of this standing committee should be to provide a two-way communication link between the ORS and the faculty, and to ensure that the ORS did not operate in isolation. Another important task should be awarding and managing the Malaspina Research Fund.

5. **That in the coming five years an attempt be made to increase the number of assisted leaves incrementally each year.** The number of assisted leaves (six) for MFA faculty has not been increased for twenty-five years. In that time the faculty has grown enormously, and Malaspina has evolved from a two-year community college into a degree-granting university college. (If these six leaves are uniformly distributed, and the current faculty remains unchanged, each regular MFA faculty member can expect a year's assisted leave once in a 30-year career). The leave program must remain strongly competitive, and successful candidates must be held accountable for their activities while on leave.

A well-run assisted-leave program is probably more effective than any other single mechanism in encouraging productive research and lively scholarship amongst the faculty.

An internal study of the net costs of the assisted-leave program would be of interest; because of lower replacement salaries, these costs are not as high as might be expected.

- 6. That departments investigate the possibility of partnerships with external academic or professional non-profit organizations, possibly to be housed on campus.** For the past three years, the *Centre for Coastal Health* (CCH) has successfully acted as a focus for biological research for both faculty and students in the Faculty of Science and Technology. This kind of partnership, which requires only minimal tangible support (i.e., office space) from Malaspina, provides links with researchers in other institutions, awareness of funding opportunities, and the on-campus presence of visiting graduate students and other researchers. It may be that other departments or faculties can benefit from similar partnerships.

Partnerships between instructors and their colleagues at universities should also be encouraged and recognized. Several Malaspina instructors hold adjunct positions at B.C. universities, and have the opportunity to collaborate in research and supervise undergraduate and graduate student research projects. This collaboration fosters the research climate at Malaspina and should be supported, perhaps via the mechanism of recommendation 7.

- 7. That some release time from teaching be provided for faculty who have demonstrated a successful record of research and professional activity, and submit a proposal for future work.** Such teaching release might consist of a few hours release for one semester, and should require both a preliminary plan and a post-release report. Teaching releases are currently provided to faculty engaged in other kinds of teaching-related activities, such as course design or curriculum review. Consideration should also be given to providing a small reduction, for the first one or two years, in the teaching workload of new faculty members who are attempting to establish themselves in programs of research and scholarship. Many newly recruited faculty members arrive at Malaspina full of enthusiasm and potential, and yet are unable to consider setting up a research program because of a heavy teaching load, usually including courses they haven't taught before.

- 8. That Deans encourage the implementation of Faculty or Departmental seminars.** Scheduling structured and regular departmental scholarly seminars has proven to be difficult for several reasons. Some departments are too small to support them, the timetabling process seems unable to provide a common time slot free of scheduled classes, and teaching workloads leave little time for faculty participation. Perhaps most problematic is the fact that Malaspina has no army of graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, or research associates to support such seminars.

In spite of these difficulties, several departments or faculties have succeeded in implementing series of presentations – albeit with somewhat different goals than the research seminar. For example, the collaborative nursing program has put in place a “quality circle” which meets regularly, and the Science and Technology faculty has promoted a weekly Spring Lecture Series that is well attended by the college community and the public. Such events focus on issues of academic interest, and facilitate the interchange of ideas between faculty and students.

A similar concern is the absence, in most departments, of a quiet space in which faculty can relax, read, and most importantly, collaborate. Most university departments have faculty “reading rooms,” sometimes provided with a small number of key journals. Although classroom-space pressures will prevent this problem from being solved easily, it must be recognized as a real need, and not dismissed lightly.

- 9. That the *Research and Development* page on the Malaspina web site be revisited.** The Malaspina web site is generally well designed, well maintained, and a credit to the institution; however, the *Research and Development* page, as currently structured and used, is questionable. For example, of the twelve sub-pages, five are completely empty, and others have such diverse entries as the “Forest Workers’ Transition Program” and the “Job-Finding Club.” This page should be renamed *Research and Scholarship*, and include institutional policies and administrative structures for research and scholarship, such as policies for human-subject research, animal care, overheads charged on research contracts, and intellectual property, as well as internal funding sources, research-office services, and links to the TTC, extension, and NRC pages. The Research Officer should be assigned responsibility for maintaining the Research and Scholarship page.

Each Faculty should have a web page, with links to a page for each department in that faculty. Individual projects of research, scholarship and professional activity would then be found on the departmental pages. This arrangement would offer a more coherent presentation of institutional policies, and of specific research and scholarship activities.

- 10. That *Mainly Malaspina* continue its current column, “Malaspina People”, for general-interest and social items, and add another, say, “Malaspina Research, Scholarship, and Professional News”.** The “Malaspina People” section of *Mainly Malaspina* is attractive and much appreciated by the Malaspina community. However, it has become very large. Changing the title for the research, scholarship, and professional news, which gives notice of papers and books published, presentations, grants and rewards received, and contracts signed would serve to highlight the scholarly and professional accomplishments of faculty. The smaller number of social and general-interest items could be kept under the old title. In the future, the new column might evolve into a separate newsletter, such as exists at many universities.

¹ Charles E. Glassick, Mary Taylor Huber, and Gene I. Maeroff, *Scholarship Assessed: Evaluation of the Professoriate* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997).

² Malaspina Scholarly Activity Committee (subcommittee of Ethics and Development), 9 July, 1999.

³ See the Malaspina Research and Development web page (<http://www.mala.bc.ca/www/randd/index.htm>).

⁴ *Malaspina Faculty Association Collective Agreement*, section 10.4.1.1.7.

⁵ Roger Elmes, “Room to Move – Humanities and Social Science Research” *College Canada*, 4, No. 2 (1999), p.9.