

Meeting Notes

Student Meeting

Friday, October 15, 2010

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

B. 300, rm. 401

Academic Plan

1. Identify our strengths in teaching that preserve the commitment to faculty-student engagement

- Concern over the way the process will be studied and student and external involvement
- Is the Educational Standards Standing Committee really the correct body to study this objective?
- Concern regarding the motivation and commitment to see this task to completion
- Concern regarding objectivity and accountability

2. Launch an initiative to improve student learning, engagement, retention and success

- If a committee is tasked with an item, does that mean the members can pull in people to help them or do they have to do it themselves?
 - *Whichever they feel would be most effective and efficient*
- Issues with student service have been brought forward in past years, so sending this issue to a group made up mostly of student services personnel does not seem to be the strongest course of action
- Do not repeat past non-productive processes
- A component of the student process is exposure to the wider world of the decanal area, so some aspiration of that goal should be put into the document
- No extracurricular resources for students; bakes sales are not a sufficient model of fundraising for students
- How will VIU measure and determine the baselines and outcomes

3. Identify strategies to improve enrolment planning and management

- In terms of parking, classes are scheduled for specific times, but there are blocks of time that have fewer classes scheduled, so that affects parking availability a lot. Will this be a consideration for this process?
- Transportation demand management plan
- How much weight does the VIUSU have with decisions that are made regarding parking or transportation?
- New 4th street exchange – unsafe, traffic is too quick, etc.

4. Complete a Strategic and Operational Plan for student services

- Important that there is interdepartmental knowledge of what each section of student services does, i.e. advising should know about registration, etc.

- There are broad services that are intertwined within student services, there needs to be a holistic look at what services are for students and what services are more community-based
- People at the frontline have an adequate depth of knowledge, but they don't have a reasonable breadth of knowledge; need more education of frontline staff
- Regional campuses are not mentioned within the context of this recommendation, or within the document as a whole
- Ability to provide an equality of service at each campus may not be realistic, but regional campus services and challenges could be expressed in more detail, and may help students at those other centre feel like they are more a part of the whole
- It may be useful to look at services separately, i.e. different campuses, library software, bookstore online (doesn't support regional campus offerings), etc.

5. Identify strategies to further develop opportunities for experiential learning

- Does this build on the current PLA system
 - Yes

7. Implement capital projects that will improve student life

- Do you foresee extra activity fees associated with this? Right now we pay a fee for recreational activities, but still have to pay for all classes and activities offered
 - *Most likely as the government no longer covers all of the cost necessary for upgrades, however, that is a part of the campus master plan as it includes new space for the student union. The VIUSU and VIU are working in partnership to keep the costs as low as possible for everyone.*
- Business plan should be required for Wellness centre, recreation, etc.

8. Formalize our statement of academic values, including the pursuit of truth

- What does the pursuit of truth mean? Can it be clarified in the plan?
 - *To provide the freedom for everyone to look into what they feel is important even if that is not perceived the same way by others*

9. Formalize the role of the First Nations Advisory Committee and Elders, and recognize the knowledge they embody

- Why are elders not faculty now? What is the background to that?
 - *VIU Elders are technicians and not formally recognized as teaching faculty*
- As a university we could take a great leadership role as one of the only places with a dedicated faculty in First Nations

10. Formalize a statement of scholarship

- What does statement of scholarship mean?
- Research is a hot topic right now, as it brings in money, however Boyer wrote a scholarship paper that went beyond research
- Way to balance teaching and scholarship

12. Develop a process for faculty evaluation

- Right now there is not a lot of faculty evaluation, how would this work?
- Develop and apply faculty evaluation
- Evaluation is supported by students
- It is a concern that the faculty here are not evaluated and it is good to see that recommendation included here
- Is it part of the recommendation that it be a standardized evaluation or will it be area specific?
 - *The evaluation process needs to reflect our vision and unique*

15. Position information technology as a key component of effective teaching and learning

- Important to be cautious that instructors aren't replaced by technology, and to acknowledge that not all people learn well or have access to online classrooms or technology at home
- Will the campus look at open software or other access software at this point

General:

- What is the baseline that is being used when we are talking about progress or moving forward?
- Some of these items will generate outcomes that can be measured, but there is talk about the need for outcomes.
 - *In terms of reporting back to Senate, the first consideration would be how far the task is moving forward, then each task would have outcomes for 5-8 years and they would be measured against that each year*
- What is the process moving forward? Is there a recommendation to have the same level of transparency that this process has had, and will there be checkpoints to ensure that the committees move forward appropriately.
 - *The VPAP's office as well as Senate will be overlooking the progress.*
- Having the same process replicated for the actions and recommendations would be good, i.e. timelines, working documents, references, etc.
- Transparency of this process is good, it would be good to replicate that for further processes
- The plan overall could have more consideration on the academic affects of student debt and the student funding model. VIU used to received 85 percent funding from government and now receives only 45 percent and the difference is being paid for by students. The pressure this puts on students is huge, this is an enrolment management issue, but also affects how someone learns, how much effort students put in, and what kind of time they have to take part in activities. This also affects VIU more as we do not have the revenues from research and such that other large universities do
- Scholarship and bursaries should focus more on student need, not necessarily on academic achievement, as need often impairs a student's academic achievement
- Will the university look at promoting post-secondary education as something that is a greater societal good?

- *The university should promote post-secondary learning, but we need to do this by building bridges, at the end of the day it is more about what we do not what we say. The community needs to see us in action so that they feel comfortable supporting the university.*
- The Integrated Planning Process has been great, even with the debate, and we would like to thank the people involved, because 10 years ago providing input was not an option