

MINUTES OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, February 4, 2003

Members Present:

C. Lajeunesse
K. Alnwick
E. Aspevig
M. Dewson
T. Knowlton
C. Matthews
S. Williams
B. Jackson
A. Cross
M. McCrae
J. Cook
E. Trott
J. Monro
D. Smith
J. Welsh
K. Raahemifar
G. Turcotte

S. Boctor
M. Booth
C. Cassidy
L. Grayson
I. Levine
J. Sandys
M. Yeates
M. Barber
A. Furman
D. Snyder
M. Dowler
M. Mazerolle
A. Pevec
L. Lum
D. Heyd
R. Ravindran
J. Dianda

C. Desouza
R. Kup
S. Marshall
R. Dutt
T. Nguyen
R. Walshaw
A. Tam
R. Rodrigues
V. Berkeley
K. Marciniac
M. Potter
G. Meti
S. Cody
A. Lohi
D. McKessock
K. Tucker Scott
D. Elder

Regrets:

G. Inwood
G. Roberts-Fiati
F. Salustri
M. Verticchio
L. Merali

Members Absent:

M. Creery
M. Koc
D. Martin
S. Kumar
P. George
B. Yoon
S. Sutherland

1. President's Report

1.1 The president again introduced David Checkland, the new president of the RFA.

There have been a large number of applications to Ryerson and enrolment details will be presented at a future meeting.

The Board has approved the funding for the Continuing Education (CE) building at 297 Victoria Street. CESAR will have offices in the building and is an integral part of the plan. The Student Campus Centre ground-breaking should be sometime in April.

The Finance Minister has been holding pre-budget consultation hearings. Michael Dewson and Judith Sandys represented the President at a consultation with the executive heads on January 27, as this was the evening of the Board of Governors meeting. They spoke on the issues of the quality assurance fund, unfunded students, inflation funding and SuperBuild.

1.2 Academic Planning – Presented by Errol Aspevig. A hand-out was circulated on the dates, times and places of six scheduled consultations on the draft of the Academic Plan, which can be found on the Vice President's website. The first consultation is general, but the rest will focus on specific issues. The complete schedule, including the topics, will be published shortly. There will be flexibility on times if there is a need to schedule more consultations. Members were asked to review the discussion paper and give their input. A revised plan will be generated for presentation to Council.

2. Report of the Secretary of Academic Council

2.1 Correction to the Terms of Reference of the SRC Committee was announced. The name of the *SRC Council* has been changed to the *SRC Representatives Group*.

2.2 Diane Schulman introduced the rationale for the changes in the *Academic Consideration and Appeals Policy* and the *Student Code of Academic Conduct*.

Errol Aspevig opened the floor to discussion:

- In the School of Journalism the current process is manageable, and appeals are handled well. The proposed policy seems more time intensive. Chairs already deal with issues as they arise.
- The committee was commended. The new policies address conflict of interest and do not take away the ability of Chairs to deal with issues. The policy gives more leeway to address issues as they occur and before they become appeals.
- The policies were commended for the efforts made to implement natural justice. The new appeals policy implies that many faculty and Chairs are not doing their jobs, but many go out of their way to help students. The Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science deals with more than half of the appeals at the university. The concept of "timely fashion" is fine, but it is felt that most problems arise after-the-fact, especially those that go into the current 2nd and 3rd levels. In the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science (FEAS) it is felt that a large number of the appeals at what is now the 1st level will become 2nd level appeals and that the need for a hearing will now require too much time. It will be difficult to find the faculty, Chairs and students to address all of the appeals in a timely way. It was requested that a more operationally manageable process be developed.
- A student representative distributed a letter sent to Dr. Schulman regarding the changes to the appeals policy, which they had already discussed. He feels that there are a lot of good changes such as improvement of the role of the Chair and improvement of merit of work and recalculation considerations. He is concerned about putting too much focus on medical documentation. The current

policy allows the committee to make recommendations to Academic Council and the Registrar, and this should be in the new policy. He asks that the restrictions for standing appeals be removed and that the policy be revisited in two years. He has not had an opportunity to comment on changes to the Code of Conduct.

- The integration of the Student Code of Conduct and the Appeals Policy was commended. Some of the changes are simply a matter of nomenclature. There actually is still a Chair's level where there can be a thoughtful process to resolve issues. This should actually reduce appeals to the Dean's level. It is still really a "three level" process which encourages students to be earlier in their request for consideration. Informational sessions are needed, both for training of Committees and Officers and for communicating to students their rights and responsibilities.
- The committee was commended for the CE student consideration.
- A member of the work group, addressed some of the issues. The work group was concerned about the Chair wearing two hats, and about bias or the perception of bias. The proposed policy frees Chairs to be more facilitative without having to act as a judge. This may make students more comfortable going to the Chair. The work group did insert the ability to appoint Appeals Officers to deal with the workload issues raised by FEAS. But there still needs to be a hearing, as students have the right to be heard. There is concern about the kind of appeals currently coming to third level. The same appeals are being heard at all three levels. The number of appeals at third level is not the issue. There were many appeals still being dealt with while students were trying to study for final exams for the subsequent semester, not knowing of their standing. Students need to be heard in a real way at the Faculty level, with a fair process.
- The section on students working collaboratively on an assignment could be clarified in terms of assistance from the Writing Centre.
- There was a question raised about the need for students to raise concerns about a graded assignment in a timely fashion. It was agreed that the work group should consider clarifying this statement.
- There was a question raised about the penalty of a "0" in an assignment. It was clarified that this would mean the entire graded assignment.
- The CE calendar will have the last date to appeal as five weeks after the last date of class.
- There is a concern that there may be a formalizing of the process whereby students informally ask for a reconsideration of a mark on a test or assignment (merit of work). This concern is based on the requirement to keep records of discussions with students regarding their requests. It was clarified that this was not at all the intent of the policy, and that a rewording of that section would be welcomed.
- There was a question raised about students with outstanding debts to the university being at risk of missing appeals deadlines. It was clarified that students who have a debt get notice of their standing but not a grade report. Despite the fact that they may have seen all of their graded work, and calculated their grades, they are not officially aware of their grades.
- It was reiterated that there was a great deal of concern in the FEAS. There are too many appeals. Chairs must attend all hearings about academic standing as they are the respondent. There is an obvious impetus to impose formal hearings at the Faculty level in order to reduce the number of appeals to Academic Council. There are no resources to deal with the appeals hearings at the Faculty level.

- It was reiterated that when the process works well appeals rarely make it to the Dean's level. It was suggested that if the current policy works well for some schools/departments, and not for others, that there be different policies.
- A member of the work group stated that, in fact, not much has changed. The main difference is that students do not have to file a formal appeal with the Chair. Since it is not a formal process there is no conflict of interest. There is no need to have differential policies. It is agreed that there may be difficulty with the number of appeals, but for FEAS there can be several designated Appeals Officers to handle the work load.
- The work group and its process were commended. It is important to distinguish between the policy and the implementation. The anomalous issues in one Faculty should not prevent the policy from proceeding. The issues which cause the large number of appeals in the FEAS need to be addressed.
- Merit of work is a reassessment of assignments. What takes place now is less formal. There is a threat that if students need to raise the issue about their work in a timely manner, a student who is anxious or unsure may question every piece of work. It was clarified that if the whole of the section is considered, the rationale is that concerns over graded work should be raised promptly to find out what is wrong and to get timely help. When such a concern is raised at a later time it is much less useful to the student.
- The new policy poses no barrier to going on to the next level, and there a considerable number of students who will go on to the Faculty level. There should be a filter of some kind, where someone decides who gets an appeal and who does not.
- The Associate Dean of Engineering has received 30 appeals for this term. His first impression of the policy was that it is a good one, but that implementation is a problem. It is predicted that there will be more appeals in the future due to increased enrolment. The first level filter will no longer be there. While implementation is challenging, he still believes the policy is sound.

The Secretary of Academic Council invited any email comments for consideration by the work group.

3. Good of the University

A statement was read by R. Ravindran concerning the death of seven students in Glacier National Park and seven Astronauts on the space shuttle. He requested that Ryerson convey its sympathies to the Calgary high school and to NASA.

M. Dowler reported that the Writing Centre has opened a satellite location in T202 for the convenience of students in that area of campus. The Centre is open to all students.

C. Matthews reported that the Canadian National Site Licensing Project has acquired a license to provide online access to scientific, technical and medical full-text articles and content from the publisher Elsevier through its Science Direct platform. This will provide online content to 61 Canadian universities. Information can be found on the Library website under the news section.

R. Rodrigues extended congratulations to CE on the approval of their new building. There will be a CESAR student referendum on a fee which will support bursaries, and to help support the student life center and the Student Success Centre.

4. Minutes of the January 14, 2002 meeting

Motion to approve the minutes: J. Welsh, seconded by J. Monro
Minutes approved.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

5.1 E-mail Policy – An outline of the various Listservs and their uses and owners was distributed. There are a few errors: ResNet should be ResearchNet and Teachnet is not the correct listserv name. C. Matthews requested her email address be corrected. Members were asked to forward corrections to Ian Marlatt. It was further noted that there is discussion about internet communication of events within the University.

The discussion of the E-Mail policy at the January meeting did not clarify the purpose of the policy, which is to require all students to have a Ryerson e-mail account for official communication, and which limits mailings to all students simultaneously.

There was discussion concerning E-mail access for CE students, but this population is highly mobile and quite large. There needs to be further analysis. It was requested that policies be printed in Nightviews.

MOTION: That Academic Council approve the policy on *Establishment of Student E-Mail Accounts for Official University Communication.*

Moved by K. Alswick, seconded by S Williams

Motion approved.

6. Correspondence

Melanie Ward has resigned as an alumni representative to Academic Council as she has taken a position outside of Toronto.

7. Reports of Actions and Recommendations of Departmental and Divisional Councils

Errol Aspevig reported on submissions from the Department of Geography, merging Table I and III, a course addition in Marketing, and course additions and deletions in Business and Technical Communication (presented as an addendum).

8. Reports of Committees

8.1 Report of the Admissions Committee (W2033-1)

MOTION: That Academic Council approve the policy on *Admission to Undergraduate Programs* as presented in the report.

Moved by K. Alswick, seconded by D. Heyd.

The proposed policy is a consolidation of current policies with no substantial change.

Motion approved.

8.2 Report of the Nominating Committee (W2003-1)

Zouheir Fawaz is nominated as a representative to Academic Standards Committee replacing Fei Yuan.

MOTION: That Academic Council approve the nomination as outlined in this report.

Moved by A. Cross, seconded by S. Cody

Motion approved.

8.2 Report of the Academic Standards Committee (W2003-1) – distributed as an addendum

MOTION: That Academic Council approve the program restructuring and related changes proposed for Information Technology Management, save for the proposed certification process associated with ITM xxx: Certification.

Moved by E. Aspevig, seconded by K. Alswick

The ITM proposal is designed as a strategy to cope with large enrolment growth and moves the school forward to its original plan.

The structure of the curriculum is not being changed very much at all. There is some movement of courses which enable students to select their area of concentration after the second year. There are three additional streams proposed which emulate the structure of the two current streams. The Enterprise Systems and Organizations stream is the product of discussions between ITM and SBM. The late submission has been agreed to by Curriculum Advising.

Motion approved.

9. New Business

Christine Desouza asked faculty to mention the student elections in their classes and wished Ken Marciniec good luck in his run for RyeSAC president. The President indicated that Academic Council was not the place to promote particular candidates.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signature on file)

Diane R. Schulman, PhD
Secretary of Academic Council