## MINUTES OF THE
## EDUCATION COUNCIL MEETING
August 23, 2013
Room 208 at 10:00 AM

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| **Present:** | Ann Marie Merkel (Vice-Chair), Denise Henning, Larry White, Deb Stava, Ian Hamilton, Julia Moore, Chris Gee, Brian Badge |
| **Videoconference:** | Reto Riesen (Chair), Sherry Beal, Dave McKeever |
| **Guests:** | David Try, Keisha Reichert |
| **Regrets:** | Gerry Gauthier, Adrian Carlick, Regina Saimoto, Steven Verblac, Mikael Jensen, Rocque Berthiaume, Mercedes de la Nuez, Joseph Daniels, Dan LeFrancois, Kimberly McIntyre, Dianne Bell |
| **Recording Secretary:** | Emily Suderman |

**Call to Order:**   Reto Riesen called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM

**NWCC's Education Council would like to thank the Tsimshian people of Kitsumkalum, especially the Laxgibuu Clan on whose traditional territory Education Council meetings take place. We particularly acknowledge Sigidimnak Xbisuunt, Vera Dudoward.**

**The Councils would also like to recognize and extend our respect to all First Nations: Tahltan, Gitxsan, Nisga'a, Haisla, Wet'suwet'en, Haida, Heiltsuk, Nuxalk, Oweekeno/Wuikinuxv, and Dakelh, who, along with Tsimshian people, we continue to collaborate and share goals of educational success.**

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| *EC.13-21*<br><br><br>*Carried* | **Adoption of Agenda**<br><br>Chris Gee requested an additional item on the agenda regarding ECE programming, as EC.13-24.5.<br><br>*Motion to adopt the agenda as amended.*<br>Reto Riesen/Chris Gee |
| *EC.13-22*<br><br><br>*Carried* | **Approval of Minutes from May 31, 2013**<br><br>Change agenda item 13.20.5 from "drafting template" to "draft template".<br><br>*Motion to pass minutes from May 31 as amended.*<br>Deb Stava/ Ian Hamilton |
| *EC.13-23* | **Business Arising** |
| *EC.13-23.1* | ➢ **Distributed Learning Task Force Report – David Try**<br>The Task Force was set up and initiated to analyze online education at our institution, |

included is a 4 page report with raw data at the end. There are 3 main areas of responses: pedagogy, technology and administrative support. The survey was designed to take a snapshot of a particular point in time, from December 2012 – February 2013. Improvements in IT mean that things are getting better quickly and more people are exposed to the various modalities of delivery.

The next step will be to solicit recommendations, and conduct a broader review of the whole college community and design a plan to support the findings and recommendations. It could include measurable outcomes that will contribute to the budgetary process, policy development and solutions for the organization.

A copy of the report is included at the end of the minutes.

*Carried*

*That we, as an Education Council, continue the task force, with September having a review of the terms of reference, for additional scope of the task force to an institution wide initiative.*
Denise Henning/ Dave McKeever

ACTION ITEM: Review the terms of reference for the task force and expectations, goals and outcomes of the task force. Distribute the report to the cluster for feedback and ask for volunteers in the clusters to join the task force report at the September meeting.

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| *EC.13-24* | **New Business** |

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| *EC.13-24.1* | ➢ **Introduction of new Interim Vice President of Education** |

Beverly Moore-Garcia has taken a new position with another institution. The Interim Vice President of Education, Larry White, has been formally appointed as a voting member of Education Council, to replace Beverly Moore-Garcia.

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| *E.C.13-24.2* | ➢ **Review CPAC business** |

CPAC needs a vice-chair that is a member of Education Council to give reports and act as a liaison. CPAC plans to hold an election for vice-chair in September.

**Trades**

- **Automotive Service Technician Foundations**

*EC.13-24.2.1*
*Carried*

*To approve the changes to Automotive Service Technicians Foundation program prerequisites, adding Apprenticeship and Workplace Math 10.*

*EC.13-24.2.2*

- **Carpentry Foundations**

*Carried*

*To approve the changes to Carpentry Foundations program prerequisites, adding Apprenticeship and Workplace Math 10.*

*EC.13-24.2.3*

- **Electrical Foundations**

*Carried*

*To approve the changes to Electrical Foundations program prerequisites, adding Apprenticeship and Workplace Math 11 with a minimum grade of "C".*

EC.13-24.3

Carried

> **Social Service Worker Program – Crisis Intervention**

*Move to accept the Crisis Intervention, SSW 215, as presented in the outline to the SSW diploma program.*

EC.13-24.4

Carried

> **Business Administration Prerequisites**

*Motion to accept the changes to the admissions requirements of the business administration program, to include the addition of the new high school math requirement, Canadian Achievement Test, math 046, admission from the Applied Business Technology program with the office assistant certificate and an accounting certificate with a 'B' average and the change to the disclaimer note regarding other institution admission requirements.*

EC.13-24.5

> **Business Administration Free Textbook Trial – David Try**

BC Campus has initiative to provide 40 free textbooks and a free textbook was used for a BADM course. Informational report has been included, the feedback was very positive from students. Other instructors, for example BIO 101 in Prince Rupert wanted to try a new textbook. Some instructors also support older versions of textbooks to reduce costs to students.

Education Council may distribute the report to the clusters and externally share the report.

EC.13-24.6

> **ECE – Chris Gee**

The ECE program is currently being delivered over two years, instead of one, and students are having a hard time receiving funding. The program instructors have noted that in the EdCo meeting minutes from MAY 27 2011 the motions struck were not followed. There was a task force that was to be struck to look at the ECE program and advisory task.

Action Item: To review the motions of May 27 and that the task force be struck, if needed, with the appropriate people, dean, administration, instructors.

Minutes regarding ECE from May 27, 2011 read as follows:

**Report - Cathay Sousa and Beverly Moore Garcia**

Programming offering changes in the budget are as follows: the Special Education Assistant will not be offered going forth into the next budget. This program wasn't presented as a "continuing need" it was originally intended as a cost recovery program. The Early Childhood Education Program will have some scheduling changes. The board invites comments and is requesting a summary of discussion be submitted to the Board.

Jessica Hrechka Fee: Early Childhood Department stresses that these cuts in these programs are affecting families and children. There are 37 pending applications for the Fall. There is a concern over funding because funders do not fund for over a year. With the new changes in scheduling Northwest Community College, we will not get all students requiring funding. FTE this year we were slightly down 15-18 students in classes.

**Motion**: Katherine Fullerton and John Krisinger
 *Program offering not to change for Special Education Assistant and Early Childhood Education until they meet with the Advisory Board.*

*7 in favour and 2 opposed*

*Carried*

**Motion:** Reto Riesen and John Krisinger
*To strike a task force with Northwest Community College management and Early Childhood representatives.   ECE areas are asked to find ways to preserve ways for the students to finish the program in the allotted time of 1 year.*

*Carried*

| EC.13-25 | **Reports** |
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| *EC.13-25.1*<br><br><br><br><br><br>*Carried* | ➢ **Chair – Reto Riesen**<br>Ann Marie is chair of the union and may not be able to sit on behalf of Education Council at the Board of Governors meetings when Reto is away. EdCo will need to appoint another member when Reto is unable to attend.<br><br>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are being decided by members of the college community as a way to have the college measure its performance, and policy governance. The 5 big ends of the Board of Governors are reflected in the strategic plan of the college. Education Council is to look at different indicators to measure how desirable is our programming for our communities. How to measure programming, define "successful programming", monitor organizational performance and budgetary process? How to make the government understand our reality – and what we don't get funded for.<br><br>ACTION ITEM: Clusters to discuss KPIs that accurately reflect the college's reality. Invite Denise to the cluster meetings. |
| *EC.13-25.2* | ➢ **CPAC**<br>All CPAC business was aforementioned in the meeting. There is no other pending CPAC business to discuss. |

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| *EC.13-25.3* | ➢ **Education Policy Analysis**<br><br>Program Review Policy is urgently needed as the process waits for this policy to be approved by Education Council.<br><br>ACTION ITEM: Review policy document and send comments to Gerry by August 30, 2013. Gerry will compile the final document and it will be distributed by September 9. Voting on the final document will take place for 5 business days and end on September 13, 2013.<br><br>*Motion: an email vote will be made to accept the Program Review Policy as delineated by the schedule written above, and will be completed on Friday, September 13, 2013.* |
| *EC.13-25.4* | ➢ **A5**<br><br>A5 will commence the meeting schedule in September to discuss the terms of reference with the Education Policy Committee. |
| *EC.13-25.5* | ➢ **FNC – Adrian Carlick**<br><br>Adrian Carlick been appointed to a community member of the Board of Governors. |
| *EC.13-25.6* | ➢ **Educational Planning and Program Review**<br><br>The drafting template, tools and questionnaire are currently being developed and will be implemented for the fall. These will be presented to Education Council at the next meeting. |
| *EC.13-25.7* | ➢ **Clusters**<br><br>No reports from the clusters were received. |
| | Meeting Adjourned: 11:50 a.m.<br><br>Next Meeting: Friday, September 27, 2013 |

**Distributed Learning Task Force Report (draft)**
On behalf of EdCo, the DOC subcommittee created and administered a survey of NWCC instructors regarding their experience and concerns regarding distance, hybrid and/or blended education. The goal of the survey is to collect our collective experience with distance education at NWCC. The survey was administered from Dec 2012 to Feb 2013.

For the purposes of this survey, distance education was defined as embracing all forms of education where the student is not exclusively in a face-to-face (F2F) classroom. At NWCC, this ranges from 'pure' online education where there are no lectures and students proceed in self-paced modes with no

'live' classroom instruction, to video conferencing where NWCC has essentially sought to extend the back of the physical classroom electronically to encompass students located, typically, in a (single) remote campus VC classroom.                           Other modalities for distance education include teleconferencing, Adobe Connect and D2L.

While it is obvious that 45 responses (of approximately 150? current full time and part time faculty) does not represent a census, it is logical to assume that staff most experienced and interested would take the 5-10 minutes to respond, and those with no experience did not.  I submit that this survey successfully captures the collective experience of NWCC instructors at this time.  It is noted that Management and support staff were not surveyed, and may have additional / other experiences worth capturing in assessing the institutional perspective.

Surprisingly, a significant number of faculty have or are using one form or another of distance education in their teaching.  While not specifically questioned in the survey, faculty confirmed their motivations in exploring distance education options were grounded in reasons well-documented in academic and practitioner literature - reach remote students, student access and student flexibility (schedules), and as a tool to enhance F2F classroom lectures.

While there is a widely held perspective that F2F is the superior educational method, certain academic studies have concluded that distance education, well done, can meet or exceed the richness of a F2F classroom.  Naturally, these studies compare students who self-select for one or the other modalities. Nevertheless, it does point out that for certain students, access, flexibility and frequent feedback, and other inherent advantages of distance delivery can overcome the lack of F2F interaction with a prof.

In conducting a standard qualitative analysis, three primary areas emerged, all well supported within the academic literature.  Staff experience to date suggests that to deliver distance education successfully and create a successful student-centered learning environment, NWCC must consider:
- Pedagogy – essential key differences inherent in distance education compared with face-to-face (F2F) classroom instruction
- Technology – both the technology itself (training & functionality) as well as support for the technology
- Administrative Support – non-technical support for remote students; ranging from simply unlocking remote classroom doors to exam invigilation for the remote students.
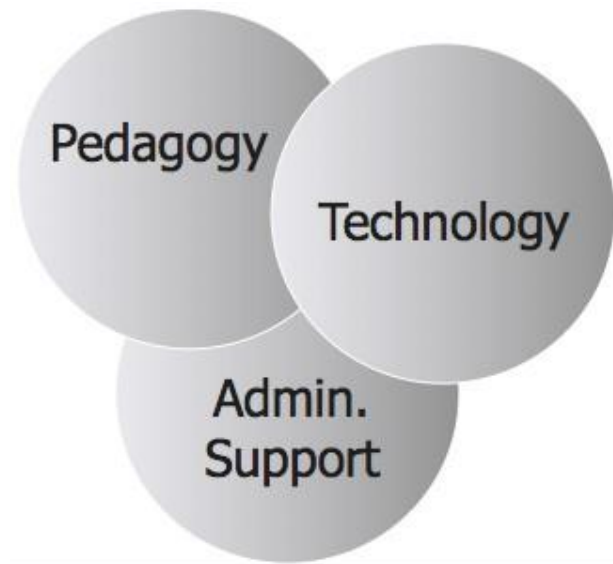
**Analysis**

Among respondents, over 2/3 of staff have experience instructing distance education. This is a substancial number. The ratio is similar to those reporting
that they have been students in distance education courses.

In focusing on instructing, 25% report a poor or substandard experience. Currently, over 80% of North American PSEs are offering (some) distance education options, collectively providing a wealth of experience and best practices. With one in four NWCC staff expressing dissatisfaction, this begs the question – what is going wrong?

Utilizing the basic model introduced above, the following sections summarizes our staff experience.

**Pedagogy** – While tautological, teaching a distance education course is not the same as teaching a F2F course. Teaching methods and strategy(s) must be adopted or modified in order to successfully transmit the course material and learning outcomes for students. In moving from a F2F classroom, a number of additional constraints and circumstances must be adopted to the virtual learning environment

For example, in a F2F classroom, the instructor is able to assess, in a continuous manner, the level of comprehension and understanding of students in the classroom by observing the students, posing questions of students, and modify levels to emphasis certain points or aspects. In a distance classroom, this immediate response is unavailable, and the course must be designed from the ground up to frequently assess progress (a mid-term and final exams will typically not suffice) and monitor class progress through the curriculum. Successful distance education involves many such pedagogical concerns that must be addressed.

At NWCC, unlike other most other BC colleges (i.e CNC), no centralized resources or centers of expertise are available to provide advice, assistance, training or capture best practices supporting teachers interested in making the transition. Nor have any efforts been made (prior to this) to capture our

collective experience or internal best practices. As a result, individual instructors have chosen many different paths to distance education.

**Technology** – To provide distance education, NWCC must adapt, preferably institution-wide (to avoid students and / or staff having to use different platforms) such as Video Conferencing and software such as Adobe Connect or D2L suitable for distance education delivery. At this time, NWCC appears to have centralized on D2L and Adobe Connect as the distance education tools, both of which are supported by BC Campus.

At NWCC, the classroom computer equipment in use (hardware), at the time of this survey, in classrooms is old, substandard, and flakey. It also includes cables strung out across classroom floors. This has caused significant problems teaching (both F2F and by distance). Note - a plan is now (May 2013) in place to address this, hopefully by the start of classes in September

Technology naturally includes support, especially 'emergency' support when classroom computers fail or crash in the middle of lectures; unfortunately, not an uncommon occurrence. While a number of initiatives are now underway, many instructors report experiences with technological failure in class and have expressed their frustration with equipment issues.

In a teaching environment, immediate support is critical. In a F2F classroom, competent instructors can carry on with the class 'on-the'fly'. However, in a distance education delivery, instructors are unable to proceed for obvious reasons. For example, an on-call technical support number for computer issues in classroom (only) would provide both psychological as well as practical support to those of us teaching live distance classes. Another option would be to have equipment turned on and tested prior to each lecture, as requested by several instructors.

Question 7 (below) specifically explores whether instructors perceived they had received sufficient support (including administrative), in every case, the majority of instructors did not agree the necessary levels of support were offered by NWCC.

A higher level of support, beyond what NWCC currently offers or funds, would arguably encourage staff to adopt distance deliver.

**Admin Support** – The third theme focuses on supporting students in remote locations. Administrative (non-technical) support can be subdivided into two areas, academic (tutoring) and clerical.

For the latter, clerical support includes such simple elements as ensuring the classroom door is unlocked, the equipment is turned on and functioning, and homework (partly pedagogy) and exam invigilation. Over the last year, NWCC has begun addressing this issue through the hiring of Distance Education Support staff. At this writing only 1 of 4 staff have been hired for NWCC campuses.

Discussions with other northern institutions (UNBC, CNC) confirm the importance of providing tutorial support both from a student perspective and to support instructors teaching. Admittedly this is a complex issue, with workload ramifications. Finding the right balance will be difficult, but NWCC

must find a process or mechanism (whether committee, union, best practice research, etc), to engage in this discussion. This would also clarify expectations of students and staff.

It is noted that a number of areas identified by one or two instructors, below, include classroom numbers, release time for development, and a stronger sense of the role of distance education at NWCC (partly addressed in the new Strategic Plan).

The raw data is included below to allow the reader to 'hear' from instructors on their successes, failure, and frustrations directly.

**Summary**

Distance education effectively means that NWCC competes, with every other NA institution offering distance education, for those northern BC students who self-select to pursue their education goals via distance methods.

In summary, the concerns identified in this survey were frankly unsurprising. These issues are frequently discussed in the academic literature, practitioner discussion forums, academic conferences, etc. They are well-known concerns, which must be overcome to offer quality distance education.

Our Strategic Plan (2012-2017) includes Distributed Learning as one of the key Goals and Objectives, and this document also makes repeated reference to related terms (flexible delivery, expanded offerings, etc).  As an institution, we must choose between (seeking to) successfully engage students, communities & staff in technological-based distance education, or opting to not compete for these students.  Both are reasonable options. However, to successfully achieve the former, we must seek-out, identify and implement solutions to the issues staff have identified in this survey.