MEETING OF THE SENATE

Monday, April 23, 2018
4:30-6:30 PM
Old Main, Room OM 3732/52/62 (please note change of location)

AGENDA

The public Senate meetings are live streamed on TRU’s Livestream channel. The livestream of the meetings is recorded. These recordings are used to assist with preparing the minutes of the meetings and the presentations from the recordings are posted on the Senate website. Once the minutes of a meeting are approved, the recording of that meeting is destroyed.

1. Call to Order
   a. Territorial Acknowledgment
   b. Acknowledgment of witnesses, Bear (Kenkéknem) and Cub (Ckenmi'm'elt)

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2. Adoption of agenda

3. Approval of minutes
   a. Minutes of March 19, 2018

Page 3

4. Reports of Officers
   a. President and Vice-Chancellor — Alan Shaver
      i. Written report from the Office of the President, April 2018
      ii. Open Governance Initiative update
   b. Provost and Vice-President Academic — Christine Bovis-Cnossen
      i. Accreditation update

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5. Reports of Committees
   a. Academic Planning and Priorities Committee — Christine Bovis-Cnossen
   b. Budget Committee of Senate — Christine Bovis-Cnossen
   c. Educational Programs Committee — Melissa Jakubec
   d. Steering Committee — Ehsan Latif

Page 16
6. Report from the Planning Council for Open Learning
   Page 113
   a. Report of December 5, 2017 — Christine Bovis-Cnossen

7. Correspondence
   Page 114
   a. 2018 Winter Election Results — Michael Bluhm
   Page 115
   b. Letter from TRU Students’ Union to Senate, dated March 12, 2018
   (Link to referenced “Student Budget Consultation Report 2018/19”)

8. Next Senate meeting
   a. The next regular meeting of Senate is on Monday, May 28, 2018 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. (note early start time)

9. Adjournment
MEETING OF THE SENATE

Monday, March 19, 2018
4:30-6:30 PM
BC Centre, Brown Family House of Learning

MINUTES

Present:
Alan Shaver (Chair), Airini, Lyn Baldwin, Lloyd Bennett, Mike Bluhm, Christine Bovis-CNossen, Barbara Jean Buckley, Tom Dickinson, Doug Ellis, Kyra Garson, Ryan Gauthier, Lyle Hirowatari, Charis Kamphuis, Mwansa Kaunda, Ehsan Latif, Bradford Morse, Mark Paetkau, Monica Sanchez-Flores, Sandra Vermeulen, Peter Tsigaris

Videoconference:
Derek Knox

Teleconference:
Brenda Mathenia, John Patterson, Gordon Rudolph

Regrets:
Christine Adam, Sheila Blackstock, Evan Choy, Jason Dabner, Dian Henderson (Vice-Chair), Michael Henry, Nathan Matthew, Donna Murnaghan, Marion Oke, Baldev Pooni, Robin Reid, Marnie Wright

Absent:
Johny Faul, Arjun Gill, Tory Handford, Jon Heshka, Adil Hosenbocus, Donald Poirier, Andrea Rhodes

Executive and Others Present:
Matt Milovich (Vice-President, Administration and Finance), John Sparks (General Counsel and Corporate Secretary), Charlene Myers (Manager, University Governance), Desiree Judd (University Governance Assistant), Dr. David Hill (Chair, Educational Programs Committee)

1. Call to Order
   a. Territorial Acknowledgment
The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. He acknowledged being on the traditional lands of the Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc within Secwépemc’ulucw, the traditional territory of the Secwépemc people.

He also acknowledged Bear (Kenkéknem) and Cub (Ckenmí̓ń’elt) as witnesses to TRU’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Recommendations.

2. Adoption of agenda

On Motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED that the agenda be adopted as circulated.

3. Approval of minutes

   a. Minutes of February 26, 2018

   On Motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of February 26, 2018 be approved as circulated.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

   a. BC Family Day and Approved Academic Schedules & Important Dates for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 Academic Years

   Senator Bluhm presented a memo regarding the revision to the Academic Schedules and Important Dates for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 Academic Years due to the change in date of the BC Family Day Statutory holiday. The Chair asked if Senate had any advice to provide to the Board with regard to these proposed changes and no issues were brought forward by Senate. The Chair will advise the Board of Governors to proceed with approval of the revisions.

5. Reports of Officers

   a. President and Vice-Chancellor
      
      i. Written report from the Office of the President, March 2018

      President Shaver highlighted several items in his written report for March, a copy of which was circulated with the agenda package.
ii. Open Governance Initiative update

President Shaver reported that he and the Vice Presidents have met with the Faculty Councils of Trades and Science and are looking forward to attending more meetings in the coming weeks.

b. Provost and Vice-President Academic

i. Accreditation update

The Provost reported that a letter was received from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The letter has gone to APPC and will flow through to Senate at April’s meeting. The letter confirms TRU’s continuing candidacy and also the report of the site evaluation. The next site visit will be in the spring of 2019.

APPC has had a presentation about Institutional learning outcomes. Feedback was given that will go back to the Teaching and Learning Committee and will be coming forward to Senate.

The General Education Task Force, established as a result of the accreditation process, will be bringing forward their models for general education to Senate later in the spring.

6. Reports of Committees

a. Budget Committee of Senate

C. Bovis-Cnossen, Committee Chair, reported that the report from BCOS was distributed with the agenda package and commented on items in the report.

C. Bovis-Cnossen and M. Milovick presented the 2018/2019 Budget, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda package, and then answered questions about the presentation.

b. Educational Programs Committee

D. Hill, Committee Chair, delivered the March 7, 2018 report from EPC, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda package. There were no questions or comments on the report.
7. **Next Senate meeting**

The Chair reported that the next regular meeting of Senate is on Monday, April 23, 2018 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. in OM 3732/52/62.

8. **Adjournment**

There being no further agenda items, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.
April 2018

Dear Colleagues,

The past month since my last report has flown by, not just for me, but I’m sure for many of you as we near the end of our winter term. I’d like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of our faculty and staff that goes into supporting our students’ success as they prepare for their final exams and papers. These can be particularly stressful times for our learners and I know each one of us does what we can for them.

Among the highlights at TRU featured in April’s report, I’d like to note two milestones that we marked this month. On April 5, we had the honour of having Premier John Horgan and Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training Melanie Mark with us to celebrate the start of construction on our new Nursing and Population Health Building. Then, a week later, hundreds of our community members—both from the university and our broader Kamloops community—joined us in person and via livestream for the announcement of our next President and Vice-Chancellor.

These were proud moments for our university as we reflect on the past, the present, and what the future holds. Please read this report for all the details.

I hope you enjoy these highlights of TRU community news, publications, accomplishments and upcoming campus events. If you would like to share a publication, presentation, external award or other recognition from within the past six months, please send the details to president@tru.ca. This report covers up to April 10; the deadline for submissions to the next report is May 9.

Sincerely,

Alan Shaver, President and Vice-Chancellor

News
TRU announces next president and vice-chancellor

The TRU Board of Governors announced the successor to TRU President and Vice-Chancellor Alan Shaver on April 12. The Sage Hills Drummers led a processional and Elder Estella Patrick Moller gave a powerful blessing to open the event. Addressing a crowd of faculty, staff, students and Kamloops community members in the Grand Hall and more watching online, board chair Jim Thomson introduced Dr. Brett Fairbairn as TRU’s fourth president.

Watch the announcement video
Listen to the April 16 Jim Harrison Show interview

“Dr. Fairbairn brings a depth of experience in academics, strategic leadership, relationship development and a strong value system of integrity, respect and accountability, added with a good measure of passion,” said Thomson. Fairbairn, who donned a WolfPack jersey, introduced his wife Norma and spoke about his children, as well as giving his take on why someone would want to be a university president. Read more

Premier breaks ground on new nursing building

BC Premier John Horgan and Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training Melanie Mark visited campus on April 5 to celebrate the ground breaking for TRU’s new Nursing and Population Health Building. Read the release

“As a nursing student, it’s gratifying to see this investment, which gives us a state-of-the art facility where we can learn and practice together. It shows the value placed on nursing and health care,” said Gabby Fisher, a third-year nursing student at TRU. Read more from Fisher’s speech

Lessons in leadership

Honours psychology major and WolfPack volleyball player Kaitlin Lomas is the recipient of the 2018 Neil Russell Student Leadership Award, in recognition of her demonstrated leadership and outstanding contributions to TRU and her community. She was a student leader with the Pack ACADEMIC EDGE (PACE) and the Student Wellness Ambassador Team, and co-led the #IBelieveYou – Supporting Survivors of Sexualized Violence campaign on campus. Read more

Special moments for students at spring law awards

Eighteen students received over $36,000 in scholarships, bursaries and prizes at the TRU Law spring awards ceremony on March 27. The students mingled with guests, including Justice Len Marchand. The financial awards available to law students continue to grow. Read more
Legal Clinic expands at new location

The TRU Community Legal Clinic is serving an increasing number of clients in a new 3,000 square-foot home on Victoria Street. Students and staff assisted over 200 clients in 2016/17; by this February they had assisted 461—now averaging 2.5 new files per day. As a result, student participation has risen from six to eight students per semester, to 12. The larger and more central space gives students more room to serve the demand from low-income populations in Kamloops for free legal services.

State-of-the-art sensors take flight over BC grasslands

Geography and Environmental Studies faculty member David Hill has received $200,000 from the Canada Foundation for Innovation’s John R. Evans Leaders Fund toward technology and equipment to undertake field studies that can improve ranching management. Hill and members of his GeoX Lab will test a new suite of remote sensors to “create methods to accurately assess rangeland health from the air,” which would have been considered a “crazy” idea only five years ago. Read more

Students spend summer as funded researchers

Nineteen students have been awarded $4,500 Undergraduate Research Experience Award Program (UREAP) scholarships. UREAP supports students to spend the summer as principle investigators, conducting their own independent research projects, whether in science, such as a study of cave microbes by Alysha Milward (shown), or arts, business, tourism or other disciplines. Read more

Dungeons & Dragons research a critical hit

Graeme Hallett won the 2018 3MT for his presentation, “Does Dungeons & Dragons Improve Social Skills?” Kicking off Research Week, TRU’s fifth annual 3MT competition on March 20 challenged graduate students in their second year of study to present their research and its significance to a non-specialist audience—in three minutes or less. Read more
Athletics honours best of the WolfPack

WolfPack volleyball player Rachel Windhorst and soccer player Mitchell Popadynetz (shown with President Shaver) were honoured at the 2017/18 Athletics Awards banquet on March 29 as the Sports Task Force Athletes of the Year. Bachelor of Science student Kendra Finch, volleyball, and Master of Business Administration student Ryan Glanville, soccer, won Dr. Roger H. Barnsley Scholar Athlete awards. The Cliff Neufeld Leadership Athlete of Year awards went to volleyball’s Kaitlin Lomas and basketball player Michael Rouault. Read more

Outstanding research mentorship

Natural Resource Sciences faculty member Karl Larsen and Psychology faculty member Catherine Ortner (shown) were recognized with 2018 Research Mentor Awards for providing meaningful guidance to support students to explore, inquire and engage in new knowledge creation. Read more

Forum for shared understanding

The Office of Aboriginal Education provided an opportunity for the TRU community to learn more about decolonization, truth and reconciliation, and indigenization at a Truth and Reconciliation Forum March 23 to 24. After a Friday evening reception and panel, Saturday featured a day of keynotes by Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild, Viola Thomas and Mavis Erickson, breakout sharing circles and a lunch with more community members.

Indigenous mentoring through Ch’nook Scholars program

Business students Christen Pretty, Dustin Petroff, Keante Joe, Kristen Johnny and Rochelle DeLaRonde (shown) have been developing their leadership skills this year as Ch’nook Scholars. The program provides Indigenous business students throughout BC with mentorship, the opportunity to network with industry professionals and $2,000 scholarships.

Second-time scholar DeLaRonde shared her experience with other Indigenous students on March 28 at Cplul’kw’ten. “I met many scholars and professionals who I am still in contact with, and it aided me in building my networking abilities,” she said. Read more

Knowledge Makers’ research celebrated

The annual Indigenous Research dinner on March 22 celebrated the work of 14 new undergraduate and graduate student Knowledge Makers for 2018 and the work of Indigenous faculty throughout 2017/18. This year’s keynote speaker was Dr. Karlo Mila, a Fulbright Scholar, researcher, author, academic and award-winning poet.
Communications instructor develops open textbook

Journalism, Communication and New Media faculty member Shannon Smyrl saw a need for a flexible, online text—so she created one, in collaboration with her Open Learning team. *University Writing Lessons* is a free, Open Education Resource (OER) textbook.

“Institutions are increasingly being called upon to support in a variety of ways the development of OER, and the support of this textbook is one of the ways TRU is doing that,” she said. Read more

Embracing an opportunity to collaborate

Last spring, ESL faculty member Jack Massalski began exploring ways to streamline international student intake—the process of welcoming, confirming and placing these students into classes—just in time to place the largest number of international student applicants in TRU’s history for 2017/18. With numerous collaborations across campus and inventive technology solutions—including using Sharepoint onOneTRU—Massalski piloted his new system with great success. Read more

Diverse research, from buses to mussels

Students shared their independent research and creative works—from a public transportation study to microplastics found in mussels—through poster presentations and 15-minute lectures at TRU’s thirteenth annual Undergraduate Research and Innovation Conference, March 23 to 24. Shown is biology student Naia Pennington (at right) being adjudicated on her poster presentation.

Renowned scholar talks baby steps to indigenization

The Department of English as a Second Language hosted Amy Abe, a renowned Indigenous studies scholar, during IDays 2018. Abe spoke on "Baby Steps on a Lifelong Journey: Indigenizing Self and Educational Practices" on March 7, and delivered two workshops, "An Education Toolkit Developed at NorQuest" and "Indigenizing in ESL," for the Faculty of Education and Social Work.

Finance students test their equity research skills

A team of finance majors competed with five other BC universities at the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute Research Challenge in Vancouver on Feb. 9. Shown (left to right) are Tanvir Sidhu, Oleksii Bielousov, Kostiantyn Siryi, Mikayla Russell, faculty advisor Dan Thompson and Rahul Pujar. The team researched and prepared an equity research report on a publicly traded company, which was evaluated by panels from the world’s top firms.
Board honours Ken Olynyk

Sporting a WolfPack jersey, Ken Olynyk, former director of Athletics and Recreation, received a recognition of excellence from the TRU Board of Governors at its March 19 meeting. He is shown with VP of Administration and Finance Matt Milovick (left) and Board Chair Jim Thomson.

Happy Bengali New Year

The TRUSU Bangladesh Club invited the TRU campus to share in the experience of celebrating Bengali New Year—Pohela Boishakh—with an evening of cultural performances and food in a red-and-white theme, on April 7 in the Grand Hall.

Lunch with the President

A full house of students engaged in conversation and networking at a Lunch with the President for Students on March 28.

Achievements

The WolfPack women’s curling team—Corryn Brown, Erin Pincott, Dezaray Hawes and Samantha Fisher—won silver at the national USports Women’s Curling 2018 Championships in Leduc, AB, on March 28. Fisher (lead) was named a First Team All-Canadian, while Brown (skip) and Pincott (third) were named Second Team All-Canadians. Read more

Tory Handford, Education, is co-editor of The Academic Gateway: Understanding the Journey to Tenure (2017), one of 10 finalists in the Career (Adult Non-Fiction) category for a 2017 INDIES Book of the Year Award from Forward Reviews, which features the best books from university and independent publishers. Winners will be announced June 15.

Human Resources and the Wellness Centre won a 2018 Extra Mile Award from the Canadian Cancer Society, BC and Yukon Division, on March 28. The Health Educator Award recognizes an organization that goes above and beyond to provide employees with health information. The society noted TRU’s innovative, multifaceted approach to sharing information, including documentary screenings and the annual health fair.

English faculty member George M. Johnson’s screenplay “Peace Pledge” was selected as a finalist in the 2018 Cannes Screenplay Contest in the Historical Drama category.

Jeff McLaughlin, Philosophy, History and Politics, was among 11 Canadians selected to receive a scholarship (up to $1,500 US) to attend the tenth International Holocaust Education Conference at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel, in June, based on his continued work to educate others about the Holocaust.

Bachelor of Science alumnus Owen Paetkau (2017) has received a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Canada Graduate Scholarships–Masters award, which will support his master's degree in medical physics at the University of Victoria.

Alex Tse, Ria McKay and Bianca Verde Rios, recent Respiratory Therapy graduates, won the gold, silver and bronze medals, respectively, in the 2018 Canadian Board for Respiratory Care (CBRC) registration exam. TRU students have been frequent medalists in past years, but this is the first time our students have won all three medals. Read more
Let’s Remember

Ted Keating was an instructional designer in Open Learning for 13 years before his retirement in 2013. With a wealth of expertise in digital and online learning, particularly in mathematics, and in teacher training, he managed the development of math courses and was a certified trainer for WebCT. He helped establish OL’s Instructional Design department, serving as co-chair in its early years. Ted will be remembered for his easy-going and supportive nature, his dedication to active living and his ability to make any subject scintillating. He loved learning and teaching, and immersed himself in life.

Publications

Note: These citations follow MLA Handbook (8th edition) format. We respectfully ask that you please format citations for your work in MLA prior to submitting them for inclusion in the President’s Report. Thank you!

JOURNALS

Wilson Bell, Philosophy, History and Politics


Matti Haverila, Marketing & International Business


Belayet Hossain, Economics


Alex Ng, Accounting and Finance

Donker, Han, Alex Ng, and Pei Shao. “Borrower Distress and the Efficiency of Relationship Banking.” Journal of Banking and Finance, 9 January 2018.

David Paul, Law


CHAPTERS

Airini, Faculty of Education & Social Work

Wilson Bell, Philosophy, History and Politics


Events

**Businesses find success from building an identity**  
April 26

Alumnus Jordan Wilman reveals how branding, a social media presence and identity can be the difference between stagnation and growth for a business.

**Day of Arts and Science**  
May 3

Grade 11 students have a chance to sample TRU's wide variety of arts and science programs with 24 unique sessions, from creative Visual Arts workshops to crime-scene investigating in Chemistry.

**Friends of the Gardens Plant Sale**  
May 5

Support the TRU Horticulture Gardens and Horticulture students at the annual FOG Plant Sale, offering annuals, perennials, grasses, herbs and vegetables.

**Retirement and 25+ Years Long-Term Service Dinner**  
May 9

TRU's annual dinner in honour of employees retiring from our institution during the past year has expanded to include employees with 25, 30, 35 or 40 years of service. Come celebrate with colleagues from across campus.

**Trash Bash 2018**  
May 10

Do your part, individually or in a team, to keep our beautiful campus clean of litter and other trash. Prizes and a BBQ lunch await the participants.

**Get more out of your wine-tasting experiences**  
May 10

The Deans Lecture Series presents a talk by Marketing and International Business faculty member Matti Haverila: Your Visit to a Wine Tasting Room…Did You Really Enjoy It?

**Chemistry Contest**  
May 16
Local Grade 11 and 12 chemistry students are on campus to write a contest-style exam based on the BC curriculum.

**Closed for Victoria Day**  
**May 21**

Most of TRU will be closed for the Victoria Day statutory holiday. If you need assistance on campus during that day, please contact Campus Security at 250-828-5033.

**Trades and Tech Thursdays**  
**May 24**

From automotive to welding, learn more about foundation programs, women in trades and Red Seal apprenticeships. [Read more](#)

**Williams Lake Commencement**  
**May 25**

Celebrate the successes of TRU Williams Lake students at Commencement. Long-Term Service Awards will be presented to faculty and staff at a lunch with the president before the ceremony.

**Bike to Work Week**  
**May 28–June 1**

Celebrate cycling by joining a team or riding solo for a chance at prizes. The Sustainability Office hosts a great lineup of events.

**Spring Convocation**  
**June 6–8**

Celebrate the success of graduates in six ceremonies across three days. See [tru.ca/convocation](http://tru.ca/convocation) for the schedule, volunteer opportunities and livestream link.
For information
At its meeting on March 15, 2018, APPC was consulted and brings forward the following to Senate for information:

1. Update: NWCCU Accreditation
   a. Letter of continuing candidacy from NWCCU President Moore
   b. NWCCU Evaluation Team Report
   c. NWCCU appoints Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, as new President and CEO.

2. Student Course Evaluations Principles and Procedures Document
   This item was approved at the Teaching and Learning Committee of Senate on February 2, 2018. It came forward to APPC for consultation.

   At its meeting on April 12, 2018, APPC approved the following and brings forward to Senate for information:

3. Process for Moving a Program/Course into Abeyance
   APPC discussed the process for moving a program/course into abeyance. Included in this report is a memorandum from APPC which details the process and items to be included when submitting an abeyance notification to APPC/PCOL.

APPC Recommends for Approval
At its meeting on March 15, 2018, APPC approved the following and recommends to Senate for approval:

1. Program Policies: Respiratory Therapy, Faculty of Science
   At Senate on January 22, 2018, the program policies for Respiratory Therapy were sent back for revision. TRU’s Legal Services department also provided feedback and revisions have been made to incorporate the changes.

   *On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED that APPC unanimously approves and recommends to Senate the program policies for Respiratory Therapy.*

2. New Program: Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Mathematics and Economics
   AF Report: [https://www.curricunet.com/TRU/reports/program_comments.cfm?programs_id=771](https://www.curricunet.com/TRU/reports/program_comments.cfm?programs_id=771)
On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED that APPC approves and recommends to Senate to recommend to the Board of Governors the Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Mathematics and Economics.

At its meeting on April 12, 2018, APPC approved the following and recommends to Senate for approval:

3. Category III Program Modification: Respiratory Therapy Diploma

AF Report:
https://www.curricunet.com/TRU/reports/program_comments.cfm?programs_id=766

CC Report:

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED that APPC approves and recommends to Senate the program modification to the Respiratory Therapy Diploma.

4. Clarification Regarding Categories I, II and III

Included in this report is a memorandum from APPC which provides background information and describes the classifications of categories. The document titled Definition of Categories comes forward to Senate for approval.

On motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED that APPC approves and recommends to Senate the Definition of Categories.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine L. Bovis-Cnossen
Chair, Academic Planning & Priorities Committee
January 31, 2018

Dr. Alan Shaver
President and Vice Chancellor
Thompson Rivers University
900 McGill Road
Kamloops, B.C. Canada V2C 0C8

Dear President Shaver:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation of Thompson Rivers University (TRU) by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on January 10-12, 2018. This action was taken after consideration of evidence, including the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report, the Peer Evaluation Report, the optional Institutional Response to the Peer Evaluation Report, and information received as part of the institutional representative meeting with commissioners.

Based on these materials and deliberations, the Commissioners took the following actions.

Accreditation
- Continue candidacy

Status of Previous Recommendations Addressed in this Evaluation
- Recommendations 1 and 3 of the Spring 2016 Initial Candidacy Peer Evaluation Report are revised and continued as Recommendations 1 and 3 of the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation Report
- Recommendations 2 and 5 of the Spring 2016 Initial Candidacy Peer Evaluation Report are revised as Recommendations 2 and 4 of the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation Report

Recommendations Fall 2017 Year Seven Evaluation Out of Compliance
The Commission finds that the following recommendations are areas where Thompson Rivers University is out of compliance with the NWCCU Standards for Accreditation and are continued to July 1, 2019, for good cause. According to U.S. Department of Education Regulation 34 CFR 602.20 and Commission Policy, Commission Action Regarding Institutional Compliance Within Specified Period (enclosed), the Commission requires that Thompson Rivers University take appropriate action to ensure these Recommendations are addressed and resolved in the prescribed period.

The Commission recommends that the institution:

2. Demonstrate that the GE component of its undergraduate programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences, to help students
develop the breadth and depth of intellect necessary to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment (Standard 2.C.9, 2.C.10).

4. Build upon its efforts to document student learning outcomes by developing appropriate measurements of student learning, analyzing assessment results, and implementing action plans in a cycle of continuous improvement (Standard 4.A.3 and 4.B.2).

Recommendations Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation in Need of Improvement

The Commission recommends that the institution:

1. Continue to improve its definition of mission fulfillment by articulating measurable institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment. While noting a useful reduction in the number of Core Theme objectives and indicators, the Commission finds that several of the indicators remain framed as inputs rather than measurable accomplishments or outcomes (Standard 1.A).

2. Develop a technology infrastructure replacement plan encompassing all locations to ensure its ability to continue supporting its operations, programs and services. The Commission finds that funding has been recently dedicated to the replacement and maintenance of technology infrastructure in TRU’s most recent budget; however, formalized planning for infrastructure replacement has not been completed (Standard 2.G.8).

3. Articulate a policy governing the academic freedoms and responsibilities of all University employees (Standard 2.A.27).

4. Document its system of internal financial controls (Standard 2.F.4). TRU’s Board Manual (Chapter 12, Audit Committee Term of Reference, section 4.3) requires that the audit committee obtain reasonable assurances that TRU has implemented appropriate systems of internal control. Additionally, NWCCU’s minimum requirements of Standard 2.F.4 include having a “description of internal financial controls.”

5. Document the relationship between its general operations and its ancillary operations funds, including whether general operations funds are permitted to support ancillary enterprises or the use of funds from ancillary enterprises may be used to support general operations (Standard 2.F.6).

Required Follow-Up

- Address Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Peer Evaluation Report within the Spring 2019 Interim Candidacy Self-Evaluation Report

Commendations Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation

The Commission commends Thompson Rivers University in particular for the following:

1. Successful programs that have engaged and supported hundreds of undergraduate students in research, as demonstrated by the annual Undergraduate Research and Innovation Conference, the Undergraduate Research Experience Awards, the Undergraduate Research Ambassadors Program, the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeships, and the Undergraduate Research Assistants program. Institutional commitment to research is also evidenced by recent growth in external funding, Core Theme 4, and multiple indicators of local, provincial and national support for the institution’s growing research agenda.

2. TRU’s commitment to serving its local communities. Evidence of this commitment includes a consistent message of sensitivity to and appreciation for the indigenous cultures in the region it serves.
as well as development of education and training programs responsive to community needs, such as the professional science master’s degrees offered on the Kamloops’ campus and the one-year certificate programs offered at Williams Lake.

3. TRU’s agility and intentionality with which it has enacted service, policy and process improvements, as demonstrated by the institution’s response to student complaints and frustrations concerning registration and course access. Recent improvements to streamline the registration process, to provide student-facing degree audit technologies, and to provide more centrally located and accessible enrollment support, represent informed and appropriate responses to the need for documented improvement in this area.

Future Evaluation

- Interim Candidacy Evaluation in Spring 2019

NWCCU is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact NWCCU.

Sincerely,

Marlene Moore, Ph.D.
President

MM:rb

c: Mr. Matthew Kennedy, Accreditation Liaison Officer
   Mr. Jim Thompson, Board Chair
   Dr. Steven VanderStaay, Chair, Evaluation Committee
Interim Candidacy Evaluation Report

Thompson Rivers University
Kamloops, BC
October 10-12, 2017

A confidential report prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
Evaluation Committee

Steven L. VanderStaay,
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington

Dr. Jason Johnson
Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
University of Washington
Seattle, WA

Dr. Lisa Carstens
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Ms. Laura McKenzie
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Mr. Steve Hiller
Director of Assessment and Planning
University of Washington Libraries
Seattle, WA

Ms. Laura Humberger
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Pamela Goad
Vice President
Northwest Commission on Colleges & Universities
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Introduction

On behalf of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, the evaluators conducted an interim candidacy evaluation of Thompson Rivers University. The evaluation team visited the campus to meet with faculty, administrators and staff on October 10-12, 2017. The evaluation was also informed by the July 21, 2016 letter of the Commission, and the recommendations sustained at that time.

Interim candidacy evaluations are conducted for institutions seeking candidacy under the authority of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, a regional accreditor. The intent of an interim candidacy peer evaluation is to assess an institution's performance and preparation for regional accreditation, relative to the Commission's Eligibility Requirements and Standards of Accreditation.

Founded as Cariboo College in 1970, the institution was granted authority to grant baccalaureate degrees in 1991, when it became known as the University College of the Cariboo (UCC). UCC gained authority to grant master's degrees in 2003. In March 2005, the institution became a university following incorporation under the Thompson Rivers University Act, which effectively amalgamated UCC with the British Columbia Open University and other aspects of the Open Learning Agency of British Columbia, to form Thompson Rivers University.

True to its origin as a community college, TRU offers adult basic education, vocational training, and open learning and online programs and courses, as well as its undergraduate and master's degrees. The University includes a campus in Williams Lake and regional centres in 100 Mile House, Ashcroft & Cache Creek, Barriere, Clearwater, Lilloet & Lytton, as well as its central facility in Kamloops, BC. The institution enrolls approximately 26,000 students, divided almost perfectly between its face-to-face and online programs. The online programs serve both Canadian and international students. The University also grants joint degrees with institutions in China, India and Iceland.

TRU's application for consideration for Candidacy was approved by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in January, 2014. NWCCU accepted TRU as a Candidate for Accreditation at the associate, baccalaureate and master's degree levels in 2016, following the University's Initial Candidacy Report and a peer evaluation. In granting Initial Candidacy, the Commission issued 5 recommendations and instructed the University to address each of them in their Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Self-Evaluation Report.

Assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report and Support Materials

This Interim Candidacy Self-Evaluation followed close on the heels of the previous self-evaluation. TRU reports that the Commission recommended that they handle this by addressing changes and new information in this report while providing links to responses
and content in the previous report where information had not changed. While this made changes and improvements easy to identify, the evaluation team found the experience of repeatedly jumping back and forth between reports via the links cumbersome. In addition, evaluators sometimes found themselves referred to sections of the previous report where links did not work. The evaluation team therefore recommends that the Commission instruct TRU to submit its next report as a single document. While this would require some additional explanations regarding refinements and changes, the reading experience would be improved for evaluators.

However, the issue described above is a relatively small concern in the larger context of a clear, concise, accurate and useful self-evaluation report. The team was especially pleased by the frankness with which the self-study describes the areas in which the institution is not yet in compliance with Commission standards. The very purpose of a self-study is for an institution to self-reflectively assess its progress and performance and we are all served by frankness in this regard.

The evaluators were treated throughout their visit with professional respect, honesty and courtesy. Requests for additional documentation and interviews were promptly met. Hospitality was exceptional; the evaluator visiting the distant Williams Lake facility was provided a driver and welcomed on that campus. Faculty, administrators and staff answered questions with poise and patience, consistently approaching their accreditation responsibilities with an eye to how assessment and accreditation can be used to further improve the quality of their services, degrees and programs.

**Topics Addressed as Addenda to the Institution’s Interim Candidacy Report**

TRU addressed five previous recommendations as addenda to the institution’s Self-Evaluation Report.

**PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 1:** The evaluation committee recommends that TRU improve its definition of mission fulfillment, and guided by that definition, articulate measurable institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment (Standard 1.A.2).

The evaluators find that the institution has revised its definition of mission fulfillment and has simplified its core themes. Importantly, TRU has also revised its indicators of core theme fulfillment, reducing the total number from 101 to 23 in order to focus on “those most relevant and meaningful to TRU and mission fulfillment.” This improvement was achieved in the short period of time between receipt of the Commission’s recommendations and submission of the current self-evaluation report, demonstrating an agile and intentional response to the Commission’s recommendation.
COMPLIMENT: The evaluation team compliments TRU on the agility and intentionality demonstrated by the manner with which it reduced and narrowed its core theme indicators of achievement to focus on the measures most meaningful and relevant to the TRU community.

In a manner common among NWCCU institutions, TRU structures its core themes as objectives whose fulfillment collectively comprises the goal of mission fulfillment. This approach requires that core theme indicators of achievement be assessable, and that the indicators have threshold targets or goals. This is an important point because the standards do not currently require goals or threshold targets for core theme indicators. However, in order to operationally comprise mission fulfillment, such targets are necessary. Otherwise, progress towards mission fulfillment cannot be evaluated. Fortunately, TRU has developed a useful system inasmuch as the institution evaluates its indicators of core theme fulfillment as “achieved,” “minimally achieved,” or “not achieved.” If the results show that 70% of the indicators for a core theme are in the Achieved or Minimally Achieved categories, TRU will consider that core theme fulfilled.” Similarly, “Mission fulfillment will occur when each of the core themes reach 70% Achieved or Minimally Achieved targets.” The evaluators find that this structure is suitable for establishing an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

While pleased with this structure and the improvements described above, the evaluation team finds that some of the indicators remain framed as inputs rather than measurable accomplishments or outcomes. Consequently, the evaluators recommend that this recommendation be sustained as revised recommendation 1, below:

REVISED RECOMMENDATION 1. While noting a useful reduction in the number of Core Theme objectives and indicators, the evaluators find that several of the indicators remain framed as inputs rather than measurable accomplishments or outcomes. Therefore, the evaluators recommend that the institution continue to improve its definition of mission fulfillment by articulating measurable institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment (1.A).

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 2: The evaluation committee recommends that the General Education component of the University’s baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution’s mission and learning outcomes for those programs (Standard 2.C.9 and 2.C.10).

Characteristic of the Canadian system of universities, degrees at TRU are not structured such that a general education component is prerequisite to the major or easily identifiable as a separate component of the degree. Indeed, it can be said that the entire idea of general
education, as a stand-alone component of a college degree separate and distinct from major study, is absent from their system. This is not to say that TRU degrees are narrowly technical or that they do not seek to provide graduates with the knowledge and abilities associated with a liberal arts and sciences education. Individuals we interviewed clearly see their BA and BS degrees as suitable preparation for advanced study and not as terminal, technical preparation. When asked, individuals could also describe the elements of general education embedded in major courses. Similarly, TRU shares in its self-evaluation that audits of its relevant programs show the integration of some components consonant with the NWCCU’s expectations for general education. Indeed, the calendar (catalog, in U.S. terminology) description of components “[a]pplicable to most BA Degree Options” (pages 53-54) suggests that many undergraduate students at TRU are likely to approximate an array of breadth and skills roughly similar to the outcomes demonstrated by graduates of US colleges and universities. However, as TRU is aware, the curriculum is not yet designed to ensure that all baccalaureate students achieve such outcomes. Similarly, “a recognizable core of general education,” as required of 2.C.9, or identifiable and assessable learning outcomes concerning general education, as required of 2.C.10.2, is not yet identifiable within the curriculum.

The evaluation team does find that TRU has actively initiated the work of developing such a general education program through the implementation of a senate ad hoc General Education Taskforce (GET). Members of this committee are educating themselves in best practice research on general education and are working with schools and programs to explore a general education model that will best suit TRU programs and students.

To meet the NWCCU standard, all TRU baccalaureate degree programs (and transfer associate degree programs, if developed) must integrate instruction in basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences; all applied undergraduate degree programs (such as TRU’s Bachelor of Technology program) and certificate programs must also identify and deliver on outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations. Consequently, the evaluation committee recommends that TRU continue to improve in this area so that it can demonstrate that the GE component of its undergraduate programs include a recognizable core of general education and assessable learning outcomes that are consonant with Standards 2.C.9 and 2.C.10. To this end, the evaluators recommend that previous recommendation 2 be sustained as revised recommendation 2, below:

**REVISED RECOMMENDATION 2.** The evaluation committee recommends that TRU demonstrate that the GE component of its undergraduate programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences, to help students develop the breadth and depth of intellect
necessary to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment (2.C.9, 2.C.10).

**PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 3:** The evaluation committee recommends that data and systems essential to the operations of the institution be backed up in a manner that protects the data and systems from natural or human-caused disaster. In addition, the committee recommends that the University evaluate and implement its options to sustainably replace end-of-life network infrastructure technologies (Standard 2.G.5).

The evaluation team finds that TRU has backed up its data, and the systems essential to the operations of the institution, in a manner that protects the data and systems from natural or human-caused disaster. The evaluators also find that the University has devoted additional funds for the replacement of IT infrastructure. However, the team finds that this was done in an ad-hoc manner and that the institution has not sufficiently evaluated and implemented its options to sustainably replace end-of-life network infrastructure technologies (Standard 2.G.5). Therefore, the team recommends that Recommendation 4 be sustained as Revised Recommendation 3, below:

**REVISED RECOMMENDATION 3:** The evaluators find that funding has been recently dedicated to the replacement and maintenance of technology infrastructure in TRU’s most recent budget; however, formalized planning for infrastructure replacement has not been completed. Consequently, the committee recommends that Thompson Rivers University develop a technology infrastructure replacement plan encompassing all its locations to ensure its ability to continue supporting its operations, programs and services. (2.G.8).

**PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 4:** The evaluation committee recommends that Thompson Rivers University continue and improve its planning to ensure that it is systematic, integrated, and comprehensive; that the planning process is inclusive and broad-based; and that the plans are informed by the collection and analysis of appropriate data and articulate institution and unit level priorities that guide decisions on resource allocation (Standard 3.A.1, 3.A.2, 3.A.3, and 3.A.4).

The evaluation team finds that TRU has continued to improve its planning in the short window between receipt of the Commission’s findings and submission of the current self-evaluation report. Evidence for this finding includes the “Open governance Initiative,” which has resulted in increased use of live-streamed town hall forums for discussion of the budget in January 2017, recent live-streamed joint meetings of the Board of Governors, Senate and PCOL, and new consultations by the President and Vice presidents with faculty councils. Student input in planning has also been strengthened by the addition of student members to Senate sub-committees, and new attention to recommendations from the Student Council. The evaluators find these changes have made planning more inclusive and
broad-based. Planning and resource allocation have also become more integrated through the use of zero-based budgeting, which was implemented, in part, to free up resources to support strategic initiatives. This practice, together with a new “Strategic Initiative Fund” of more than a million dollars is used to direct resources toward initiatives that serve the strategic objectives and core themes. This fund has recently been used to fund a new Co-op coordinator for the Engineering program, in support of the core themes on student success and research. Separately, a recommendation from the TRU Student Union (TRUSU) Budget Consultation Report fueled TRU’s priority of adopting Degree Works for course and academic planning. This initiative was also informed by concerns about course enrollment difficulties documented in the previous peer-evaluation report.

The evaluators find that recent changes and continued development of accessible reports and dashboards by the office of Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (IPE) have also permitted strategic planning and resource allocation to be informed by the appropriate collection, analysis and use of data. Committee members of each of the planning bodies interviewed by the evaluation team could specify data they had asked for or used in planning and resource allocation decisions. IPE, which employs more than a dozen analysts, has substantial capacity in this regard and is now working intentionally to make its data more accessible, useful and available to stakeholders. Increasing amounts of data and readable reports concerning enrollment, retention, graduation, and other information—much of it usefully specific to each college—is available via the IPE website and their Factbook. In addition to its formal presentations and services, IPE has also planned brown bag lunches to permit informal discussions regarding the use and application of its data and analytical services. Consequently, the evaluation team recommends that previous Recommendation 4 be considered fulfilled and that it be removed.

**PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 5.** The evaluation committee recommends that the University build upon its efforts to document student learning outcomes by developing appropriate measurements of student learning, analyzing assessment results, and implementing action plans in a cycle of continuous improvement (Standard 4.A.3 and 4.B.2).

The evaluation team finds evidence of considerable activity with respect to recommendation 5. The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) has substantial expertise in SLO development and assessment. In addition, many of TRU’s programs, such as nursing, have been engaged in SLO documentation and assessment for many years. TRU has drawn from this expertise to establish Faculty Fellows who have release time to assist departments in the establishment of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and many more departments now have PLOs than was the case a year ago.
In addition, because the litmus test of quality in academic settings depends upon documentation of what students know and can do, student learning assessment requires that an institution’s faculty make the paradigm shift from an emphasis upon teaching, and what a teacher knows and can do, to student achievement, or what the teacher, degree, program or certification has successfully helped the student to know or be able to do. TRU may be advantaged in this regard, due to its longstanding identity as a teaching institution and its hallmark attention to preparing students for technical fields in which classroom tasks are closely modeled on real-world activities. Consequently, while the institution’s student-learning assessment procedures and practices are still developing, support and understanding of the value and purpose of such practices provides a useful foundation upon which further refinement and improvement of those procedures and practices can occur. Given this orientation and the work of CELT and its faculty fellows, the evaluators do find that TRU is developing the resources and capacity necessary to eventually fulfill the requirements of this recommendation and of the many standards associated with student learning outcome assessment. However, TRU will need to continue to advance quickly in these matters. In this regard, the evaluators are concerned that TRU may be establishing processes that are more complicated than necessary.

For instance, a comparison of the 2017 “List of Program-level Learning Outcomes” (Appendix D of the 2017 Interim Candidacy Report), with the list of the same in the 2016 Self-Evaluation Report (Appendix 4), demonstrates exponential growth in this regard. A recent restructuring of the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching is placing this endeavor front and center as a small cadre of Teaching Fellows look to advance PLO development more broadly in the coming months. Additionally, the General Education Taskforce (GET) is working diligently on the development of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) which map to TRU’s evolving set of Graduate Attributes. The following table, included in a recent survey of TRU faculty by the GET, illustrates progress to date:
This table was coupled with the question, “Do the ILOs align with the Graduate Attributes?” followed by a 5-point agreement scale. The evaluators recognize this, along with the effort to generate and crystallize PLOs, as evidence that TRU is collaboratively constructing a serviceable framework for aligning institutional learning outcomes with program-level outcomes; such a framework may usefully support both general education assessment and student learning outcomes assessment.

However, and as is also often the case in the early development and use of student learning outcomes, many of the draft program learning outcomes (PLOs) are not written so as to be assessable. In other instances there are so many PLOs that the evaluators fear that development of sustainable assessment plans, and the actual assessment itself, will prove overwhelming. Consequently, the evaluation team recommends that Previous Recommendation 5 be sustained as previously worded. The evaluators also provide the following compliment and concern regarding Previous Recommendation 5 and Standard 4.A.3.

**COMPLIMENT:** The evaluation team compliments TRU for the intentional steps it has taken to train faculty specialists in the development of program learning outcomes and for providing release time for these faculty to assist departments.

**CONCERN:** The evaluation team is concerned that the Program Learning Outcomes established by some departments are so numerous and broad that development of actionable assessment plans, and program assessment itself, will prove overwhelming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRU Graduate Attributes</th>
<th>DRAFT Institutional Learning Outcomes Graduates will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>• Depth and breadth of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Knowledge acquisition and application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>• Demonstrate, integrate and apply a depth and breadth of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Exhibit the skills necessary to be an effective leader and team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Apply critical thinking and problem solving within diverse contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and Commitments</td>
<td>• Reflect on and set goals for learning beyond their university experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognize and respect the value of Indigenous knowledge, traditional ways, and worldviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Value the importance of multiple cultural worldviews (including one’s own)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Critically evaluate and apply socially responsible and ethical behaviours to sustainable practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMPLIMENT:** The evaluation team compliments TRU for the intentional steps it has taken to train faculty specialists in the development of program learning outcomes and for providing release time for these faculty to assist departments.

**CONCERN:** The evaluation team is concerned that the Program Learning Outcomes established by some departments are so numerous and broad that development of actionable assessment plans, and program assessment itself, will prove overwhelming.
The team hopes that these PLOs can be considered first drafts and revised with an eye to sustainability and ease of use. More specifically, program-level outcomes should be limited in number and distinguished from course-level outcomes.

**Eligibility Requirements 2-21**

The evaluation team finds that TRU meets all NWCCU Eligibility Requirements with the exception of Eligibility Requirement 12, concerning General Education.
Section One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

(Standard One)

1.A. Mission and 1.B. Core Themes

The evaluators find that the TRU mission statement and core themes are clearly defined, appropriately approved and adopted by its governing boards, consistent with its legal authorization, and appropriate to its purpose as a degree-granting institution of higher education. The mission provides sufficient direction for the University’s efforts and derives from and is sufficiently understood by its community. Guided by its mission, the University sufficiently articulates an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment. The University devotes substantially all of its resources to support its educational mission and core themes.

Mission Statement

Thompson Rivers University is a comprehensive, learner-centered environmentally responsible institution that serves its regional, national, and international learners and their communities through high quality and flexible education, training, research and scholarship.

Other components of the evaluation team’s assessment of 1.A. and 1.B, and its recommendation concerning these standards, appears in its evaluation of Previous Recommendation 1.

CORE THEMES

Thompson Rivers University has identified core themes that individually manifest and collectively encompass its mission. These core themes are discussed in section VIII of this report (“Core Theme Planning, Effectiveness, and Improvement”) and are as follows:

- Student Success
- Intercultural Understanding
- Sustainability
- Research

The evaluators heard broad support for the mission, which they found prominently displayed in key areas of the University. The evaluators heard similar support for the core themes and that stakeholders and participants appreciated the process by which the core themes were selected, felt they had sufficient opportunities for input in this and other strategic planning efforts. Consequently, the evaluation team finds the mission meets
Standard 1.A.1 inasmuch as it is widely published, approved and, most importantly, articulates a purpose of the institution that gives direction for the institution. Similarly, the core themes align with this mission statement such that they each manifest essential elements of the mission and collectively encompass the mission. Finally, TRU has done remarkable work in refining its core themes presented in its February 2016 Self-Evaluation Report. Since receiving feedback in April 2016, TRU has effectively truncated its sets of core themes (from five to four) and indicators (from 101 to 23) to present a more incisive, compelling, and functional path toward mission fulfillment. (1.B.1).

TRU has established objectives for each core theme as well as (an) outcome(s) for each objective, followed by sets of indicators, rationales, and “mission fulfillment threshold ranges” for each outcome. Regarding the latter, the 2017 Self-Evaluation Report differs from the 2016 iteration in that it is no longer explicitly drawing from the ministry-defined rubric of “exceeded,” “achieved,” “mostly achieved,” and “not achieved” (with 10% intervals in relation to being above and below targets). Instead, TRU has shifted to a tripartite set of ranges (“achieved,” “minimally achieved,” and “not achieved”), and identifies metrics with greater variation (i.e., not beholden to 10% marks), which is more appropriate for further pursuit of accreditation with the NWCCU (1.B.2).
Section Two: Resources and Capacity  
(Standard Two)

Standard 2.A. Governance

Reflective of Provincial structures and TRU’s origins in the merger of the University College of the Cariboo with BC Open Learning University, and the fact that each of these institutions were absorbed with faculty who continue to be represented by separate unions and CBAs, TRU’s system of governance is substantially different from that of most universities accredited by NWCCU. TRU, for instance, has a system of governance comprised of a Board of Governors, Senate, and the planning Council for open Learning (PCOL). The evaluators find that this system, while unique, meets all institutional needs and Standard 2A. The evaluation team finds that TRU has a functioning governing board, appropriately organized and structured, with policies and practices of review and evaluation that fulfill standards 2.A.1-8, and an effective system of leadership, sufficiently staffed and organized for planning and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness (2.A.9-11). Academic policies continue to be published to the community on the TRU website, and all are dated with main contacts named. A policy on policies is being considered to ensure that all policies are regularly updated, as certain policies (e.g., ADM 3-0 Copyright) have been in existence without review for over 20 years. TRU continues to publicize its academic policies through an accessible “Index of all Policies” (2.A.12). (See Academic Policies, and Shared Assets.)

Library policies are documented, published to the community on the “Library Policies” web page, and enforced equitably on both the Kamloops and Williams Lake locations. As over 50% of the student population are in open learning courses and programs, it would be advantageous to develop and disseminate policies that assist this unique population (2.A.13). (See Library Policies.) Transfer of credit is regulated provincially and nationally by the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer and the Pan Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credit. Both are referenced in the transfer policy (ED 2-4.), and followed accordingly. (See Shared Assests.) The manner in which the university builds programs ensures “laddering” of courses systematically toward the attainment of offered credentials (certificates, diplomas, baccalaureate degrees, et cetera). (2.A.13).

The institution’s Transferability of University Credits policy and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) policy are prominently displayed and easily accessible on the University’s web site. To facilitate efficiency in mobility from associate-level to baccalaureate-level programs, the transferability policy that “guarantees sixty (60) credits will be awarded to transfer students who hold an Associate Degree awarded by a BC post-
secondary institution that follows the approved BC provincial Associate Degree requirements.” The whole of this policy is necessarily aligned with the “Pan Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credit” (an “action plan to increase accessibility, equity, and mobility for postsecondary students” throughout Canada (2.A.14). Student policies and procedures of the institution are also clearly stated and readily available for students. These policies can be found in the online index of academic policies and are published in the TRU Academic Calendar. These policies include academic integrity, suspension of students, student academic appeals, respectful workplace, harassment prevention, sexual violence and accommodations for persons with disabilities policies. TRU works to fairly and consistently administer all student rights and responsibilities by centralizing student case management in the Office of Student and Judicial Affairs. Appeals are eventually heard by a board convened by the University Registrar (2.A.15).

The admission and placement of students is guided through policies the university has adopted. These policies provide multiple different options for admission opportunity in adherence to the institutions’ legislated mandate for open access to education. The specific standards are published in the academic calendar, in the online policy index and on the websites developed to specifically serve defined populations. TRU has three categories of admission: open, limited and selective. Continuation standards are clearly outlined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy. This policy addresses the requirements for students to stay in good academic standing, academic probation parameters and circumstances that require students to withdraw. In addition, presidential expulsion of students for conduct and/or failure to demonstrate adequate effort is available for students to review. Appeal and readmission policies are indexed and accessible to students and other university constituents (2.A.16). Similarly, the “TRU Beyond the Classroom” website clearly outlines the institutions relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of both the students and the institution for those activities. Student athletes are given a handbook and are required to attend an orientation that outlines their responsibilities as representatives of the university (2.A.17). And the institution publishes its human resources policies and procedures in the policy index. In addition, the human resources website has some direct hyperlinks to policies referred to in the content of that page. Human resources policies are subject to the review and revision standards published in the policy on policy development and standards. The Associate Vice President of Human Resources and Planning and the Director of Human Resources are responsible to make sure that all policies and procedures are consistent, fair and equitably applied (2.A.18).

The TRU Faculty Association (TRUFA), TRU Open Learning Faculty Association (TRUOLFA), and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 4879 are collective bargaining groups that the majority of TRU employees are members of. The university’s human resources website publishes the collective bargaining agreements for each of these
organizations. The Association of Professional Administrators, while not a formal union, also exists at TRU to represent the interest of administrative employees. The human resources division publishes a guide to the working conditions and benefits for administrative employees. Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion and termination through orientation programs and a required meeting with a human resources officer within the first two weeks of employment. Two review and planning programs, one for administrators and one for all other employees, provides a framework for employees and supervisors to ensure a mutual understanding of performance expectations. The goals of these two programs are to align employee roles responsibilities with TRU’s strategic priorities (2.A.19)

Human resources records have a confidentiality rating of ‘high’ in TRU’s classified system; this rating requires those records be treated in accordance with the established in the institutions security and confidentiality of university information policies available on in the index of policies. Additional guidelines that establish the responsibility of users who access employee data are set forth by the Enterprise Resource Planning Project Banner Implementation: Data Standards, Data Integrity and Security Guidelines. Information security awareness training is required for all employees that have access to confidential information. This training is available online or in person. (2.A.20).

The provincial system of educational administration allows for institutions to enter into inter-institutional partnership agreements for education and conferring of degrees from one institution to another institution. When Thompson Rivers University was a university college (known as the University College of the Cariboo), it was unable to confer its own degrees and was required to contract with other institutions (e.g., University of British Columbia) for the students to complete their educations at the Kamloops and Williams Lake locations.

When the university was granted its university status in 2005, it was given the authority to confer its own degrees at each of its locations (and online with the merger of British Columbia Open Learning into University College of the Cariboo) and to confer its degrees at other university colleges in the province. The university has established agreements of this kind with the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (for the Bachelor of Social Work degree in Merritt & Burnaby, British Columbia), the Shanghai Institute of Technology (for the Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Shanghai, China), and other distant institutions, as noted on its Basic Institutional Data Form.

The university’s statements and policies guaranteeing the academic freedom of its faculty appear in its Collective Bargaining Agreements with its campus-based and online faculty. The evaluators could find no mention of “academic freedom” in the collective bargaining
agreements with other university employees. However, faculty and staff interviewed by the evaluators uniformly stated that their academic freedom is respected. Additionally, evidence for institutional support for intellectual and academic freedom is present in other policies and practices at TRU. As noted by the previous evaluation team, this evidence can be found in statements ranging from the “freedom of expression” regulation in the “Responsible Use of Technology Facilities and Services” policy that is intended to facilitate “open inquiry and public discourse” and in the “major objectives” of the Strategic Research Plan 2014-2019 which states a goal of “be[ing] inclusive of individual research programs, recognizing the importance of intellectual freedom for researchers to pursue their interests and passions without undue constraints and interference...” (2.A.27, 28). Consequently, the evaluation team finds evidence that the academic freedom of faculty and staff is respected at TRU. However, the evaluators are concerned that academic freedom is not guaranteed in a published policy for all employees, and that the faculty’s guarantee of academic freedom appears in a bargaining agreement, where it is arguably subject to change. Therefore, the evaluators recommend that TRU articulate a policy governing the academic freedoms and responsibilities of all university employees, as noted in Recommendation 5, below:

**RECOMMENDATION:** The evaluators recommend that TRU articulate a policy governing the academic freedoms and responsibilities of all university employees (2.A.27). Otherwise, such freedom is arguably subject to change or removal in bargaining processes.

The evaluation team finds evidence that individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately and objectively, and that derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property. This is evident in TRU’s “Integrity in Research and Scholarship” policy, the Student Academic Integrity policy, and the institution’s collective bargaining agreements (2.A.29).

**2.B. Human Resources**

The evaluators find that TRU employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations. All employees have defined job descriptions which accurately reflect the duties, responsibilities and authority of the position. Criteria, qualifications and procedures for selection of new personnel are clear, collaborative and public (2.B.1).

TRU has three collective bargaining groups: TRU Faculty Association (TRUFA), TRU Open Learning Faculty Association (TRUOLFA), and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 4879. A fourth group named the Association of Professional Administrators (APA) also exists at TRU to represent the interest of the administrative employees (president and board excluded). Contract parameters for employees in the unions are established in the collective bargaining agreements.
Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly regarding their work performance. Chairs are evaluated in their second year of a three-year contract and deans receive a formative evaluation in the third year and a summative evaluation in the fifth year. Support staff and exempt middle management are scheduled to receive a yearly evaluation. Adoption of the annual evaluation practice is ongoing and currently is inconsistent across campus (2.B.2).

The institution provided faculty, staff and administrators, and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development. This provides them with ways to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties and responsibilities. All employees are eligible to participate in monthly workshops provided by the Human Resources Division. The Human Resources Division also provides training the Chairs and appoints committee training for faculty members to ensure they are effective in their assignments. All new faculty members go through a two-day training program designed to introduce them to TRU and orient them to the processes and structures of TRU. All faculty members may utilize resources and pedagogical support provided by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

Faculty members are provided with funding, dedicated time for professional development and educational loans to support professional growth. Ongoing faculty members receive a professional development allowance of $1750 annually (with an annual increase of $50) and continuing sessional faculty receive $1,000. In addition, they are provided with 20 days of professional development annually and have access to interest-free educational loans to use to obtain further education. Staff and administrators are encouraged to obtain higher education through the use of tuition waivers and professional development funds to upgrade their education (2.B.3)

TRU employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs (2.B.4)

Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institutions expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research and/or artistic creation. One of TRU’s core themes is research; in order to support this core theme a portion of faculty have a 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% service structure and new faculty continue to be hired within this structure. The parameters of faculty responsibility and workload are guided by the collective bargaining agreements (2.B.5).

Information presented to the evaluators show that TRU is in compliance with this standard. All faculty members participate in an annual performance evaluation as outline to the TRUFA and TRUOLFA collective bargaining agreements (2.B.6)
2.C. Education Resources

Program descriptions reflect appropriate content and rigour consistent with TRU’s multifaceted educational mission, leading to collegiate-level degrees or certificates consonant with the aims of recognized fields of study. While TRU engages in assessment of student achievement through imbedded course assessments, periodic program reviews, and alumni and employer satisfaction surveys, TRU’s historic assessment process has not involved describing program aims in terms of “clearly identified student learning outcomes,” so programs for the most part do not yet describe and assess student achievement in those terms. To be clear, TRU’s programs may nonetheless be excellently designed and taught; however, the provisions for evidence of achievement do not yet align with NWCCU requirements (2.C.1).

Even as programs do describe their general goals, the institution does not yet identify and publish expected course program and degree learning outcomes in a way consistent with NWCCU expectations (2.C.2). Credit and degrees are based on documented student achievement in relation to TRU’s current manner of describing and documenting student achievement (2.C.3). Degree programs demonstrate appropriate design and admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and published (2.C.4).

Faculty structures for exercising authority over the curriculum and over faculty hiring are appropriate. Curriculum development originates in programs and departments, answers to a program sustainability worksheet, is approved at school levels through Faculty Councils, is approved at the institutional faculty level through the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (which also considers mission, market, and graduate attributes), and is assessed for support needs through offices such as the registrar; programs are then approved by the faculty-majority (undergraduate) Educational Programs Committee or Graduate Programs Committee of the Senate and then by the Senate as a whole. The evaluation team must note, however, that standard 2.C.5 also references the assessment of “student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes,” which is not yet a broadly implemented approach at TRU. It is understood that, going forward, new programs and programs under external review must provide evidence of clearly articulated learning outcomes and an assessment plan. Faculty hiring is pursued with appropriate faculty involvement and oversight (2.C.5).

Faculty and instructors work closely with librarians to integrate information on effective access and use of library and information resources into the curriculum. TRU Library liaisons provide a wide range of support, including instruction, to academic programs and general instruction is offered under the tutelage of the Instruction and Research Services Librarian who coordinates library instruction. Policy and online instruction request forms
are available on the TRU Library Web site. Instruction content and pedagogy are aligned with the standards articulated by academic library associations (2.C.6).

TRU does allow for credit to be awarded for prior experiential learning. Referred to as “Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR),” information is publicized on the PLAR web site and governed by policy ED 2-0. The evaluators find that TRU is in line with Standard 2.C.7 on all fronts with one possible exception and one potential issue that may need further attention by the NWCCU. While it is clear that PLAR-related activity happens in the undergraduate sphere through TRU, ED 2-0 does not explicitly state that credit for prior learning is limited to the undergraduate level. More significant, in the estimation of the evaluators, is the fact that TRU is required by the TRU Act to not set a percentage threshold for prior learning credits applied toward degrees offered in the Open Learning division. TRU has offered evidence to show that it is exceedingly rare for a TRU student to apply prior learning credit above the 25% threshold established in Standard 2.C.7 but it does indeed happen from time to time (2.C.7).

TRU’s “Transferability of University Credits” policy (ED 2-4), provides guidelines for granting transfer credit generally and specifically with regard to transfer credit earned through associate’s degrees and transfer credit awarded for prior learning. The whole of this policy is necessarily aligned with the “Pan Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credit,” which commits TRU to accept credits from other Canadian universities, as guided by each faculty body responsible for setting policy for their respective programs of study (2.C.8).

As the 2016 evaluation team noted, “the United States concept of ‘general education’ does not translate well into the Canadian System of higher education,” particularly with regard to the baccalaureate having “prescriptive requirements” in broad disciplinary spheres, e.g., humanities, natural sciences, social sciences. TRU baccalaureate degree programs do not require course-taking in this regard across the board, whether through traditional “2+2” distribution models of general education or other models that explicitly integrate humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences coursework across the span of four-year academic plans. While TRU baccalaureate programs do not maintain a form that speaks to the standard in ways that are familiar to NWCCU members (which is a matter that does require attention as this review of candidacy continues) TRU baccalaureate programs arguably hold the potential to function in a manner that is consistent with Standard 2.C.9. It is clear that the TRU leadership and its Accreditation Steering Committee have accepted the invitation presented by the previous evaluation team to build upon the “Graduate Attributes” TRU had recently developed in such a way that they anchor the development of learning outcomes and assessments that are aligned with the intention of the 2.C.9, namely, to prepare graduates for “a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment.” In short, TRU in a position to make an argument for how its baccalaureate programs function
well toward this end, and the present evaluation team finds that progress has been made. This is discussed further in our consideration of Previous Recommendation 2 (2.C.9, 2.C.10).

With regard to applied undergraduate and certificate programs, the evaluators find that TRU incorporates instruction in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations in ways that support program goals. As with traditional baccalaureate-level programs, TRU is in a position to make an argument that its applied undergraduate and certificate programs do maintain a “recognizable core.” A useful reference point in this regard is the BC Transfer Guide, which outlines requirements for the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees as provincial credentials in the BC Transfer System. Specific requirements for each include coursework in communication (English), computation (e.g., mathematics), and human relations (e.g., arts) (2.C.11).

All graduate program offerings are consistent with the mission and appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered (2.C.12). (See Program Offerings.) Admission policies are compatible with the programs’ requirements. Students who do not have the requisite undergraduate education to enter into a graduate program may apply the techniques under the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition policy to satisfy admission requirements upon approval by the appropriate chair or designate (2.C.13).

The evaluation team concurs with the spirit of the previous team’s assertion that “the Commission will need to determine whether or not to exempt TRU from Standard 2.C.14,” which prohibits graduate credit for experiential learning that occurs before matriculation, because the awarding of such credit is mandated by the province. However, the university has yet to grant graduate credit in such instances and does not foresee doing so. Consequently, we find TRU effectively in compliance with this standard.

The evaluators find evidence that TRU has established policies and procedures for appropriate thesis preparation and defense, and for professional assessment of the knowledge and ability of students graduating from programs designed to prepare students for professional practice. While program level outcome assessment will improve institutional performance relative to standard 2.C.15, TRU’s use of professional advisory boards, employer surveys, and its close relationship with industry, sufficiently that demonstrate compliance with this standard.

TRU’s continuing education programs are well-aligned with its mission to serve educational needs in its region. Specific evidence of satisfactory alliance with this criterion was observed in Williams Lake where administrators work in concert with local and indigenous persons to create special programs to meet specialized needs for the area served in accordance with the mission as defined in the Thompson Rivers University Act (2.C.16).
**COMPLIMENT:** The evaluators compliment the staff of the Williams Lake Campus of TRU for working in concert so intentionally with its community centers to build courses and programs—both credit and non-credit bearing—to meet the needs of the populations of the Williams Lake area. Specific attention is paid to the unique needs of each indigenous people group to “serve the educational and training needs in the region” [See TRU Act 3(3)(a)].

The evaluators concur with the previous evaluators’ finding that TRU demonstrates satisfactory compliance with standards 2.C.17-19.

**2.D. Student Support Resources**

With the exception of 2.D.10 noted below, the evaluators find that the material presented in the self-study and through on campus interviews, provides evidence that TRU is in compliance with the standards established in 2.D. Student Support Resources.

Academic Advising for first and second year undergraduate students are advised by professional staff that report to the Vice President of Strategic Enrolment and University Registrar. Third and fourth year students are advised by personnel in their program of study. International students are assigned an international advisor but are also welcome to use the advising resources outlined above. While some students communicated advising met their expectations, other students, including TRUSU, have reported inaccuracy in advising, lack of accessibility of advisors and lack of service continuity. Staff members report that students must seek out advising and that a clear system to track program and graduation requirements is not available to students or advisors. The advising tool called Degree Works is projected to be delivered to the students to assist in meeting this need but students feel that this project has not received the attention, prioritization and funding it needs (2.D.10).

**CONCERN:** Academic Advising and the tracking of degree progress has been a communicated concern of the TRUSU for multiple years. While the implementation of Degree Works is expected to improve institutional performance relative to this concern, the evaluators recommend that TRU continue to assess its advising services to ensure they effectively support student development and success (2.D.10).

**Standard 2.E. Library Resources**

The mission of the Thompson Rivers University (TRU) Library is to “advance inquiry, discovery and engagement by providing the TRU community with quality resources, services, and technologies to support teaching, learning and research.” The TRU Library is user-focused and holds or provides access to library and information resources that support the institution’s mission, core themes, programs and services. The TRU Library
Web site provides online access to most services and resources, facilitating access to library and information resources regardless of location. The TRU Library faculty and staff have well-defined responsibilities and expertise that are commensurate for an institution of this size and mission. The librarian liaison program has strengthened the connection to academic programs and led to increased instruction opportunities and research consultations. New librarian positions covering user engagement and student success, and electronic resources and assessment provide greater capacity and more effective support for the TRU core themes of increasing student success, research and sustainability.

Kamloops library facilities are split between two locations: the Main Library (2446 assignable sq. meters) and the House of Learning (1278 assignable sq. meters). The collections are divided by call number with 197 seats between the two locations. There are additional study areas available in the House of Learning outside the library. The institution acknowledges that seating needs to be increased and there were a significant number of comments from the 2013 LibQUAL+ survey stating the need for more seating, quiet spaces and better access to the House of Learning Library collection. There is now a separate, quiet graduate student space in the Main Library but other seating concerns remain. The Main Library is open to 9:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and to 5:00pm Fridays and Saturdays, while the House of Learning library is only open to 5:00 pm and closed on Sunday. While arrangements can be made to retrieve items from the House of Learning library during evenings, access to the science and engineering collection there is limited. The Law Library, also on the Kamloops campus, reports to the Thompson Rivers University Library but is focused on serving the needs of the Law School and is open to those outside of Law only by appointment.

**CONCERN:** As noted in the initial candidacy evaluation, the multiple library locations on the Kamloops campus create service duplication and stretch library staff. It is not optimal service for the TRU community as the split collections and different hours of opening can be confusing and may limit opportunities for research and student engagement (2.E.1).

Open Learning students can access library services and information resources remotely and there is an Open Education Librarian who coordinates open learning services as well as interlibrary loan and Open Educational Resources (OER). The TRU Library maintains a small collection at the Williams Lake Campus which is staffed by one librarian during the academic year. Open hours are limited to weekdays. Students and faculty at Williams Lake have access to the Kamloops libraries resources and there is regular courier service for physical items, although it may take a week from request to delivery.

The TRU Library collection of information resources includes approximately 239,000 volumes, 159,000 e-books, more than 10,000 e-journal titles from publisher sites and a
substantial number of additional titles through aggregators. Participation in several library consortia furthers access to a more extensive body of information resources, especially online ones such as databases, e-journals and e-books. More than 90% of the collection budget is spent on electronic resources, all of which are accessible to the TRU community regardless of their location. However, while institutional enrolment and new degree and graduate programs have grown during the past several years, the library’s collection budget has not kept pace with these changes or maintained purchasing power to meet ongoing annual price increases. New graduate degree programs, such as environmental economics and management and nursing, will place additional stress on the collections budget. A new library curriculum consultation form provides an opportunity to specify library resources needed for new programs and is a good initial step at better integrating the library into the program approval process. The process should be tracked to determine whether identified library needs are supported.

CONCERN: The TRU Library collections budget remains flat at a time of increased program growth and ongoing price increases on information resources. This impacts the ability of the TRU Library to advance a sustainable research culture and affects the support provided for both continuing and new programs (2.E.1).

The TRU Library plays a lead role in the annual Undergraduate Research and Innovation Conference. A librarian coordinates the conference, poster sessions are held in the HOL Library, and papers are deposited on the TRU Library institutional repository, Digital Commons @ TRU Library, which also contains other works of institutional scholarship and research.

COMPLIMENT: The evaluators compliment the TRU Library for taking a lead role in the annual Undergraduate Research and Innovation Conference. This conference features undergraduate research both in posters and presentations, highlighting student success. The student papers deposited in the TRU Library Digital Commons are among the most requested items in this institutional repository.

The TRU Library liaison program provides opportunities for user feedback as well as library outreach and services. Feedback is also provided through the library instruction program from both course instructors and students. The TRU Library ran the LibQUAL+ survey in 2008 and 2013 which collected structured user feedback through a survey and comments, but has decided not to use this instrument again. Additional avenues for input, especially from students would prove beneficial for planning. TRU Library faculty and staff also contribute to library planning and are integral to successful planning both internally and externally.

The TRU Library Strategic Plan (2012-2014) and accompanying Library Services Action Plan are out-of-date. A new strategic plan is under development and the evaluation team
encourages the active solicitation of input from faculty, staff and students. The next iteration of these plans would also benefit from developing metrics that indicate success in achieving stated outcomes (2.E.2).

The Library provides a full range of instruction and support services to the TRU community. These include both in-person and remote reference, consultations, general and course instruction, including the using the course management system, where appropriate, to better integrate library support into the curriculum. In FY17, there were 329 instruction/presentation sessions with nearly 4300 participants. A large number of frequently updated online LibGuides, available to the entire TRU community, complements instructional sessions and research consultations, and are especially useful for library services that support the curriculum (2.E.3).

The TRU Library uses Lib Analytics Insight as well as an Electronic Resource Management (ERM) system to compile data and track services and resource use, using this data to make adjustments and improvements as needed. The collection is evaluated using methods such as cost-per-use, and service transaction data is used to evaluate services as reference provision, desk staffing, and open hours.

There is currently no program for systematically assessing library services. Identifying and implementing an ongoing process for assessment of library services and resources will enable more comprehensive evaluation of the impact and contributions of the library to institutional mission and core themes (2.E.4).

**CONCERN:** A sustainable outcomes-based assessment program is needed to systematically evaluate TRU Library effectiveness and contributions to student, faculty and staff success (2.E.4).

The TRU Library belongs to several consortia, including the Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPUL). Through the buying power of these consortia the library provides access to a far more extensive range of resources, particularly online resources, than a library can achieve on its own. The TRU Library evaluates the cost-effectiveness of such purchases in their support of institutional mission and priorities.

**2.F. Financial Resources**

The institution is required by law to maintain a balanced fiscal year budget, so management devotes considerable attention to the timing of short-term operating results, while also engaging in long-term planning. Long-term capital maintenance needs are documented at the individual building level through a comprehensive Facilities Condition Index which encompasses all properties owned by the institution at all locations. Based on discussions with campus personnel, and on review of budget documentation and other
materials submitted and/or referenced in the interim candidacy report, sufficient procedures appear to be in place to enable realistic financial planning and risk management (2.F.1).

The Integrated Planning and Effectiveness Office projects enrollments (by level) based on prior-year enrollment yields from applications and other relevant data, conforming to standard practices. Budgets for self-supporting and ancillary operations are included in the institution’s budget process and must also ensure balanced annual budgets, combined with long-term planning. Budget development is performed at what campus personnel describe as a modified zero-based budget, which is reflected in a Budget Methodology Handbook. The interim candidacy report (including references) provides evidence that resource planning includes realistic and responsible projections of enrollment and tuition revenue, grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources (2.F.2).

Defined policies and processes are in place for budget development, including the Budget Methodology Handbook. The interim candidacy report indicates that the budgeting process involves faculties, schools, and service units, although based on discussions with faculty and staff, the level of participation in the budget process at the faculty and staff level varies by college.

The annual budget is reviewed by the Budget Committee of the Senate and the full Senate and is finally approved by the Board of Governors.

Additional resources may be requested based on teaching needs (extra course sections for additional enrollment, for example) or for strategic initiatives through a Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). Criteria for awarding SIF are clear and transparent, and mapped to the institution’s strategic priorities. Reporting on the success of each Strategic Initiative is to be made to the relevant Executive, though no formal assessment of the outcomes is performed to determine whether the Executive will award base funding for the initiative (2.F.3).

TRU uses an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles, as legislatively required. Annual audited financial statements and audit reports are posted on the Finance Office website, and so are publicly available. Board Manual (Chapter 12 Audit Committee Term of Reference, section 4.3) requires that the audit committee obtain reasonable assurances that TRU has implemented appropriate systems of internal control. While a documented system of internal controls does not exist, TRU management indicates that a major review of internal controls and improvements based on that review is planned within three to five years.

**RECOMMENDATION:** TRU’s Board Manual (Chapter 12, Audit Committee Term of Reference, section 4.3) requires that the audit committee obtain reasonable assurances
that TRU has implemented appropriate systems of internal control. Additionally, NWCCU’s minimum requirements of Standard 2.F.4 include having a “description of internal financial controls.” As such, the evaluation team recommends that TRU document its system of internal financial controls (2.F.4).

TRU adopted a Campus Master Plan in 2013; the plan is long-term in nature, intended to ensure that future capital development at the Thompson Rivers campus aligns with the institution’s strategic priorities. Facilities office staff confirmed that master plan is consulted when site selection for new buildings and infrastructure is performed.

Campus input with respect to capital funding decisions is obtained through a Capital Projects Planning Advisory Group (CPPAG), with requests for new space above $5 million submitted to the CPPAG. A campus presentation explaining the evaluation criteria and application process was held in Spring 2017.

The Province hires outside consultants to perform and document an annual review of facilities conditions relative to academic and administrative buildings, and TRU provides funding to obtain the same service for its ancillary facilities, resulting in a comprehensive and current plan for all owned facilities.

The province does not permit TRU to take on debt; as such, TRU has engaged in Public Private Partnerships to achieve desired capital enhancements for self-supporting activities, and in leasing arrangements to satisfy equipment needs. According to management, the most recent budget also included $300,000 for academic equipment needs (2.F.5).

TRU’s ancillary operations are accounted separately from general operations of the university, and also different business lines within the ancillary operations are separate. Ancillary operations’ surplus revenues are used for capital projects, either related to the auxiliary enterprise or to general campus needs, or to augment the general operating budget, according financial management personnel. It does not appear from the interim candidacy report and discussions with management that this relationship has been documented as specified in the standard, e.g., whether policies govern the uses of ancillary funds described, if there is an established set of priorities for use of surpluses, who is authorized to make decisions regarding the use of ancillary operations surpluses, and so on.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The evaluators recommend that TRU document the relationship between its general operations and its ancillary operations funds, including whether general operations funds are permitted to support ancillary enterprises or the use of funds from ancillary enterprises may be used to support general operations (2.F.6).
TRU undergoes an annual external financial audit pursuant to the standards required by the province by an accredited auditing firm under generally accepted auditing standards. All findings are reported to the Board of Governors Audit Committee, and audited financial statements are posted publically on the institution’s website (2.F.7).

As described in the interim candidacy report, “TRU’s fundraising activities are carried out by the TRU Foundation, a registered charity whose sole purpose is to raise funds for TRU. The TRU Foundation conducts all institutional fundraising activities in a professional and ethical manner, including compliance with the legislated requirements of the Canadian Revenue Agency and the BC Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists. Clear articulation of the relationship between the university and the TRU Foundation appears in the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding, adopted in 2008.” The evaluators note that the Memorandum of Understanding indicated that a process review was to be completed with respect to the MOU in 2011; evidence of such review was not included within the interim candidacy report (2.F.8).

2.G. Physical and Technological Infrastructure

Except as indicated under specific standards below, the evidence presented in the interim candidacy report and included references indicates that TRU is compliant with the standards concerning physical and technological infrastructure.

TRU has completed significant new construction in the past 15 years, and also expanded its facilities through the use of Public Private Partnerships. Facilities conditions are regularly assessed by an outside consultant, and a detailed Facilities Condition Index (FCI) is maintained which documents major maintenance needs, and the timing of those needs, at the individual building level.

Annual funding of $1 million from the Province is matched with $1 million from the institution to address deferred maintenance. Based on discussions with management, major maintenance projects are prioritized based on life safety needs first, then on physical comfort/learning environment (this reportedly usually involves HVAC improvements to ensure that the environment in the academic buildings is conducive to learning); additionally, self-supporting ancillary enterprises (such as housing) are generally expected to generate funds necessary to satisfy related capital needs.

TRU maintains an active process for physical space planning and input, including a Space Committee and the previously mentioned CPPAG (2.G.1).

The institution recently adopted a hazardous waste policy which includes provisions for the safe use, storage and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials—the “Biosafety and Biosecurity policy ADM 25-0.” The policy gives the BioSafety officer the authority to stop
work if necessary to address health and safety issues. The BioSafety manual is referred to in the post-award management site and contains relevant guidance. (BioSafety) (2.G.2).

The Master Plan addresses the Kamloops Campus; however, the standard on master planning applies to branch campuses such as Williams Lake as well; the evaluation team did not find any evidence that comprehensive planning has been performed for that site.

Both the Master Plan and subsequent Implementation Plan were developed on the basis of a 20- to 60-year timeframe. Shorter-term planning performed by a Space Planning Committee is informed by a Space Utilization Study.

Together, the space planning committee and the CPPAG (established in Fall 2016), provide sufficient avenues to align the institution's capital planning needs with its strategic priorities. Recommendations from the CPPAG are presented to the President, and form the basis for projects to include in the 5-year capital plan submitted annually to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training (AEST). Recommendations are based on the institution's strategic priorities related to creating new space for students, teaching and research; reducing deferred maintenance; and improving sustainability. Criteria for evaluating and prioritizing space requests are clearly delineated (2.G.3).

Classroom furnishings and desktop/classroom IT equipment are regularly refreshed, the latter because it is leased rather than purchased. Opinions expressed during faculty and staff forums indicated that equipment is adequate and the leasing arrangement ensures that computer equipment is in good working order.

The interim candidacy report did not mention the condition or resources for the replacement of the wide variety of equipment needed for instructional programs, e.g., equipment for trades such as welding equipment or testing equipment for automotive maintenance, or equipment for academic programs such as scientific instruments for laboratories. It was mentioned that an additional $300,000 has been allocated in the current year budget for such equipment (2.G.4).

Technological equipment, infrastructure, and supporting services appear adequately developed to be able to serve the needs of the campus in achieving its mission. Personnel overseeing the support functions indicated that sufficient staffing is in place to serve campus needs.

Banner systems are backed up using a separate, reliable physical location (BCNET EduCloud service hosted in Vancouver) and Oracle Data Guard software. The TRU data center includes redundant UPS and generator backup for the air cooling system. The institution indicates that backup and recovery systems are tested annually.
A tabletop exercise of the Information Technology Disaster Recovery Plan was conducted. Procedures regarding recovery points and recovery times are detailed in the IT-DRP, as noted by the evaluation team.

Security awareness training at TRU includes online courses and face to face sessions covering security awareness essentials, privacy and access instruction, hands-on encryption workshops, and other sessions. Over 2000 faculty and staff registrations for these trainings are reported. In addition, ITS offers training solutions from Lynda.com (382 active employees), Banner/ERP systems training, and Sharepoint training.

The evaluators inquired as to systems and security regarding the processing of customer and student credit card data. The institution has established a PCI (Payment Card Industry) Steering Committee, which completed detailed and comprehensive self-assessment questionnaires designed to identify gaps in data security; has implemented changes to address and eliminate identified gaps; and has provided training to staff involved in the collection or processing of credit card data.

**COMPLIMENT:** The institution has demonstrated a commitment to protecting its students’ financial data through the work of its PCI Steering Committee. Personnel have completed detailed and comprehensive self-assessments of credit card data security using criteria established by the Payment Card Industry Security Standards Council; has acted upon the assessment through improvements to its network architecture and other procedures; and has provided security training to institutional personnel involved in handling credit card data.

In staff and faculty forums, the evaluation team heard concerns with respect to delivery of technical support specifically to face-to-face faculty and staff (as opposed to Open Learning faculty and staff) on both the Kamloops and Williams Lake campuses.

**CONCERN:** The evaluation team suggests that management evaluate technology support timing and availability for all locations, and ensure that the technology support team appropriately communicates the mechanisms by which faculty and staff may receive help and support in a timely fashion (2.G.6).

Opportunities for input to technology infrastructure planning occur through three committees with broad representation of students, faculty, staff, and administrators from across the university. There is also an established annual planning cycle (2.G.7).

Desktop and classroom IT equipment is leased and as part of the contract equipment is refreshed on a four-year cycle. However, there is not a financial plan for refreshing larger infrastructure. There currently is no specific reserve fund to replace end of life network technologies including switches, routers and wireless. However, management reports that
funding has been allocated to do so when necessary. As a result, ITS must look opportunistically for funding to complete the upgrade of end-of-life wireless access points, controllers and management software or alternative managed services. Though funding may be carried forward in a capital reserve for significant capital projects, certain of the technology infrastructure needs do not rise to the level considered “capital” so must be funded in the annual operating budget.

The evaluators find that technology equipment replacement plans are robust, and additional funding has been dedicated to technology infrastructure replacement in its most recent budget; however, formalized planning for infrastructure replacement has not yet been completed. As such, the committee is concerned that Thompson Rivers University has not yet developed a technology infrastructure replacement plan to ensure that it is able to continue to support its operations, programs and services.

**CONCERN:** The evaluation team is concerned that the institution has not yet developed a technology infrastructure replacement plan to ensure that it is able to continue to support its operations, programs and services (2.G.8).
Section 3: Planning and Implementation
(Standard Three)

Standard 3.A: Institutional Planning

As noted in this evaluation’s consideration of Previous Recommendation 4, the evaluation team finds that TRU has significantly improved its institutional planning in the short window between receipt of the Commission’s findings and submission of the current self-evaluation report. The “Open Governance Initiative” created opportunities for participation of students, staff and faculty by publicly livestreaming Board of Governors and Senate meetings; and increased consultations by the President and Vice Presidents with faculty councils. The initiative is a well-documented and intentional planning process, and robust institutional research is made available in reader-friendly reports and an online factbook demonstrates that planning is ongoing, purposeful, comprehensive, broad-based, inclusive, and informed by the collection of appropriately defined data used (3.A.1, 2). Assuming further refinement of the core theme indicators of achievement, as recommended in Revised Recommendation 1, we expect that the institution's comprehensive planning process will be informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that will be analyzed and used to evaluate mission fulfillment (3.A.3). The evaluators find that institution’s Strategic Research Plan, Campus Master Plan, and Strategic Sustainability Plan effectively articulate priorities and guide decisions on resource allocation and application of institutional capacity (3.A.4). TRU’s Emergency Management Plan, its system of emergency alerts, and the activities and preparation of its Incident Management Team, provide evidence of compliance with 3.A.5, concerning emergency preparedness.

CORE THEMES

Core Theme 1: STUDENT SUCCESS

1B: Core Theme
3B: Core Theme Planning

The first Core Theme, labeled “Student Success” and encompassing access, support, and student educational achievement, is a very promising theme for capturing essential elements of TRU’s mission fulfillment. It is clear that the institution worked diligently and collaboratively on the project of defining mission fulfillment, and it is commendable that TRU succeeded in reducing the number of indicators down to a manageable number. A few opportunities for further improvement present themselves: First, in some instances the articulation of the objective and the measures proposed to assess the objective could be more precisely aligned. For instance, objective one mixes two goals of student access and
transparency of requirements and processes, but none of the indicators measures “transparency” of requirements or processes. Similarly, Theme One Outcome 3.1 promises to measure student “action” in relation to skills, knowledge and other attributes, but the indicators aren’t of a type to measure student performance.

A second opportunity for improvement would be to augment measures of student participation with evidence of student attainment, and otherwise prioritize indicators that demonstrate end results rather than institutional inputs, starting points, and means. For instance, objective two is the objective most concerned with the educational goal of cognitive development, but it is focused solely on student participation rather than performance; mission fulfillment would be more persuasively demonstrated with some direct evidence of student learning and/or of indirect but broadly recognized cumulative outcomes, such as graduation rates and employment/advanced study rates (indicators that were indeed included among TRU’s initial 100+ indicators). While it may seem as if this suggestion of adding some absent indicators contradicts the previous advice to reduce the number of indicators, the intention of this feedback is to suggest that TRU consider whether it has in all cases chosen the most meaningful measures of ultimate achievement. For instance, TRU may want to consider its rationale for prioritizing indicators such as student satisfaction with the registration process and student conversion rates (percent of accepted students who matriculate) above student graduation and employment rates, as the most significant indicators of mission fulfillment.

Because TRU’s Student Success Core Theme objective three, with its focus on enabling students to develop attributes “for citizenship, work and personal fulfillment,” draws from the language of standard 2.C.9 regarding an institution’s general education component, TRU may benefit from feedback about that objective in relation to the Commission’s expectations for meeting that standard. It will be important for TRU to keep in mind that, while any number of educational facets may contribute to students’ “skills, knowledge, confidence and values for citizenship work, and personal fulfillment,” the NWCCU standard for general education will still also require a particular subset of Baccalaureate degree educational components that meet outcomes aligned with breadth representing “basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences and social sciences.” All baccalaureate (and transfer associate degree programs, if present) will need to demonstrate integration of those general education components, such that an indicator seeking to measure only those students who pursue the OL Bachelor of General Studies program (as is now proposed) will not suffice to demonstrate an institution-wide achievement in this area. Similarly, any applied baccalaureate degrees or certificates of 30 or more semester credits (or the equivalent) must demonstrate integration of outcomes reflecting communication, computation, and human relations.
The description of new committee structures and workflows for developing the Core Themes and for future planning and assessment looks very promising. The Accreditation Steering Committee is a broadly representative leadership team, the General Education Task force is also broadly representative and engaging in thoughtful outreach to all the schools, and the faculty governance arms working on new curriculum development and program review are integrated into the effort to develop a culture of well-defined program and learning outcomes as well as assessment plans for measuring student learning. It will be important for TRU to establish timelines and milestone targets for these efforts, if it is to implement universal program/learning outcomes with assessment processes within the remaining candidacy window.

**COMPLIMENT:** The evaluation team compliments the faculty and staff’s commitment to a grass-roots, inclusive and authentic planning process toward designing general education programming appropriate to TRU’s mission and context.

**4A: Core Theme Assessment**

TRU’s report explains active tracking of data collection for the indicators currently proposed or for its plans to institute tracking for selected indicators not currently tracked. As discussed under Core Theme Planning, TRU may still want to include a few indicators not yet listed that will also involve assessments not yet being undertaken.

The evaluation team sees and appreciates extensive activity and progress toward developing clearly identified program goals or intended outcomes which will provide a foundation for an effective system of assessment of its programs and services. The evaluation team also appreciates TRU’s commitment to students through its audit of student services and its many initiatives underway to improve the student experience in relation to degree planning, scheduling, and navigating TRU’s processes. The team further notes the thoughtful guidance being provided by the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching and its faculty teaching fellows toward helping programs develop more meaningful program learning outcomes. Guiding documents demonstrate a promising institutional understanding of meaningful, measurable student learning outcomes, and TRU staff and faculty testified to a growing, positive “culture of assessment,” itself an encouraging sign of the institution’s progress. The evaluation team learned from the various reporting bodies that new program proposals must articulate learning outcomes and assessment plans before they will be approved. The CELT team further reported that, in addition to programs working independently on learning outcomes, ten programs underwent a guided process of developing strong program learning outcomes last year and ten more programs are likely to do so this year. The audit of program learning outcomes provided in TRU’s report appendix did not yet reflect the results from those ten guided programs. Among the programs whose outcomes are represented in the appendix are
many strong examples of PLOs, including those developed for programs in the School of Business and Economics. In other cases, the listed PLOs still need refinement, as they sometimes include objectives that are not likely measurable as articulated, such as goals for the style of leadership graduates will exhibit in their professions, which won’t (as described) be assessable by faculty.

As complimented above, TRU faculty and staff are demonstrating admirable engagement in this foundational process of defining assessable learning outcomes. It is clear that TRU recognizes the need to follow that process with the development and implementation of annual outcomes assessment plans imbedded in a cycle of continuous improvement (an NWCCU expectation beyond periodic program reviews). TRU has not yet advanced far enough in that process to provide evidence of the kind of learning outcomes-based program assessment expected by NWCCU.

Because TRU has carefully aligned its Core Themes with its Strategic Priorities and has a carefully delineated annual process for assessing its progress on those priorities, in most respects TRU aligns its programs and services with respect to accomplishment of its Core Themes. However, because TRU’s historic program review process has not been aligned with the Commission’s current expectations for student outcome-oriented assessment in relation to Core Themes, the evaluation team cannot say at this time that TRU “evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of assessment with respect to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs” (4.A.5). That is, it is understood that this remains a work in progress and that there is an inevitable gap in relation to how program assessment is accomplished for Core Theme accomplishment. In the same way, and despite its impressive strategic planning activities and processes, the institution has not yet developed “assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement” in strict terms of NWCCU expectations.

The evaluation team agrees with TRU in its self-assessment that it has made significant progress in revising its definition of mission fulfillment. It has also made notable strides in drafting ILOs from the previously approved graduate attributes as well as in leading program development of PLOs. Furthermore, it’s General Education Task force is a broadly representative faculty-majority group highly engaged in the process of exploring general education programming and engaging the broader faculty in discussion toward adopting a model of general education appropriate for TRU. The process is not yet far enough along for the evaluation team to comment on how the developing models align or not with NWCCU standards.
4.B: Core Theme Improvement

While TRU programs currently have varying approaches to reflecting on their success and making improvements, TRU is still developing its framework for NWCCU-compliant outcomes and assessment. Nonetheless, TRU already demonstrates considerable attention to improvement in relation to the component areas of its Student Success core theme. Its growth in programs designed to serve identified constituent needs as well as its ongoing work to improve access through transfer articulation agreements demonstrates improvement in student access. Student representatives (few in numbers but consistent in message) also extolled TRU for student support services in areas of supplemental learning, tutoring, orientation, faculty availability and support, multi-faith and cultural support, and improvements in enrolment services. A fourth-year student in sociology who has stretched her TRU education across nine years remarked that student support is much stronger now than when she started. As another fourth-year student, in psychology, enthusiastically put it, support for students at TRU is “ridiculous!” The evaluators recognize this description as high praise indeed.

Core Theme 2: INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

   1B: Core Theme

   3B: Core Theme Planning

The second core theme, “Intercultural Understanding,” persists from 2016, and is given expression through two objectives: (1) “The creation of a culture of inclusion in all aspects of university work and life” and (2) “[Institutional engagement] in Indigenous, regional, national, and global learning through teaching, learning, knowledge, research and creative practice.” This theme and these objectives are consistent with TRU’s strong place-based mission (i.e., serving the people and communities of Kamloops, Williams Lake, their environs, and B.C. more broadly) and the contextualized extension of that mission that recognizes TRU as an institution that is at once characterized by the influences of globalization and by aspirations to be more, in a word, global. The planning for and assessment of this core theme is still under development, which is addressed later.

Planning for the core theme of “Intercultural Understanding” is consistent with TRU’s overall institutional planning and is sufficiently guiding related institutional activities. A sub-committee of a robustly representative Accreditation Steering Committee, which meets monthly, guides the advancement of this core theme.

4A/4.B: Core Theme Assessment and Improvement

Two objective-outcome pairs are presented for the Intercultural Understanding core theme. Given the work TRU is undertaking with regard to general education, the evaluation
team finds it instructive to highlight challenges and opportunities associated with the first pair: “Objective 1: The creation of a culture of inclusion in all aspects of university work and life. ... Outcome 1.1: Enhanced inclusion of intercultural learning within curriculum, teaching, and service.” The key indicator associated with this objective-outcome pair is “Student perceptions of inclusion and opportunities for intercultural learning, as indicated by NSSE scores of 4th year students.” An evaluation of this without general education in mind yields a generally positive result inasmuch as this objective-outcome-indicator trio can be viewed, generally speaking, through the lens of “climate.” Do students at TRU experience a culture of inclusion as evidenced by what they see as a commitment at TRU to be inclusive? There is clearly value in advancing these constructs together. However, given that there is an intersection emerging with the development of Institutional Learning Outcomes, the mapping of those with Graduate Attributes, etc., the evaluation team sees a problematic scenario on the horizon. Put simply, the aforementioned NSSE scores would not be sufficient measures of, for example, the Institutional Learning Outcome that reads, “Recognize and respect the value of Indigenous knowledge, traditional ways, and worldviews.” To be fair, it is not uncommon for higher education professionals engaged in assessment planning to mistake participation in an activity or general experience of a phenomenon as learning. This is often a challenge that emerges and then serves as a starting point for identifying more appropriate measures of learning. The evaluation team recognizes that TRU is in the thick of general education learning outcomes development, implementation, and assessment. Whether that work connects explicitly with the continued refinement of this core theme is an institutional choice. The evaluation team does not recommend that it be connected or not, but rather, that its connection or separateness be explicitly noted in further iterations of accreditation-related documentation.

Core Theme 3: SUSTAINABILITY

1B: Core Theme

3B: Core Theme Planning

The university’s theme of sustainability manifests an essential element of the mission and has objectives with meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement. One change made since the last visit was the elimination of a measure of financial sustainability. This was initially a concern of the team (which echoed a concern of the previous team for 3.B.1-3.B.3); however, meetings with the campus helped the team understand that financial sustainability was a requirement of the province. Therefore, any partial measurement would be inappropriate, as the province requires complete compliance with financial sustainability.

The Campus Strategic Sustainability Plan remains in effect with sections that are informed by data within the STARS framework (which is used as the only indicator for each of the
four outcomes). It is concerning that this Core Theme’s plan is devoid of any indication of the Williams Lake or other extension locations in the province. In contrast, “Kamloops” is explicitly mentioned eighteen (18) times throughout the document.

4A/4.B: Core Theme Assessment and Improvement

The assessments of the Core Theme for Sustainability have been pared down to a single indicator, rationale, and goal for each of the four outcomes of the theme. The indicator for Outcome 1.1 is a single score for the university rather than a segmented score for the Kamloops location and a score for the Williams Lake location. Without separate indicators, it may be difficult to prove that the university is committed to sustainability based on its development, operation, and maintenance of the separate campus and regional centers. Additionally, there are no indications that the locations in China, India, or Iceland have separate ways to be included in the assessment of adherence to this Core Theme (4.A.1 - 4.A.6).

**CONCERN:** If the institution desires to integrate sustainability across its operations and continues to operate in multiple provincial and international locations, it would benefit from reviewing its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement (4.A.6).

Since each outcome has a single indicator—and the university does not have a STARS assessment segmented to the separate locations—it is not possible to triangulate the data to ensure improvement is in place. Nonetheless, the institution has moved from gold in 2016 to the cusp of platinum status in the STARS framework in 2017.

Core Theme Four: RESEARCH

1B: Core Theme

3B: Core Theme Planning

Planning for the core theme of "Research" is consistent with TRU’s overall institutional planning and is sufficiently guiding related institutional activities. A sub-committee of a robustly representative Accreditation Steering Committee, which meets monthly, guides the advancement of this core theme.

TRU is being responsive to its emerging role as a university under the auspices of the TRU Act, which calls the university “to undertake and maintain research and scholarly activities for the purposes of…” reinforcing its baccalaureate and masters programs as well as its post-secondary and adult basic education and training programs and to “establish facilities for the pursuit of original research in all branches of knowledge” ["so far as and to the full extent that its resources from time to time permit"]. To strengthen such programs, TRU has concentrated efforts on hiring faculty under “tripartite” (research+teaching+service) as
well as “bipartite” (teaching+service) terms and conditions of employment, as detailed in the 2014-2019 Collective Agreement. Further evidence of a strengthening nexus between this core theme and institutional planning and activities can be found in the provision for the development of “Outdoor Research Space” in campus master planning, e.g., 2014 Campus Design Guidelines, 2015 Master Plan Summary and Implementation Report. TRU’s “Strategic Research Plan” ([https://www.tru.ca/__shared/assets/SRP_2014-201934208.pdf](https://www.tru.ca/__shared/assets/SRP_2014-201934208.pdf)) provides further expression of its commitment to interweave teaching, learning, and research to “make a difference” and “build on strong research traditions to promote “education, health, and diversity” through “community and cultural engagement.”

4A/4.B: Core Theme Assessment and Improvement

The effort to create a sustainable research culture at TRU is clearly parsed into three outcomes focused on securing external funding, creating new knowledge, and dissemination of new knowledge. The indicators, rationales, and goals for external funding are clear. However, the goals in particular may be a bit of a reach considering the historical values presented for 2017 – can the percentage of faculty holding external funding increase by 16% over the next two years and can the total dollar amount of grants and contracts nearly double to $4.5M? Reductions in the targets may be reasonable.

The remaining two outcomes – “TRU faculty create new knowledge” and “TRU faculty and students disseminate new knowledge impactful to the communities we serve” – are less developed, however. Five year goals and historical values for amount and impact of scholarship are not yet available. Work is underway on two fronts. One, TRU faculty and administration are engaged in deliberations over what constitutes “quality” vis-à-vis peer-reviewed publications. There is recognition that not all peer-reviewed publications are equal. Some faculty bodies have well-established methods for demarcating levels of quality in publication (e.g., economics) and other faculty bodies are reportedly engaged in conversations to reconcile questions concerning quality in publication and other scholarly/creative work. Also a work in progress is a mechanism for systematically documenting reports of faculty productivity. Faculty are required to submit an annual Professional Activity Report (“APAR”) to their respective deans and department chairs. This is currently completed as Word documents or a paper-based process, both which do not lend well to contributing towards an institutional database of all faculty publications and other types of dissemination. Two, the “Number of Community Citations Score” that is central to the dissemination of new knowledge objective remains in “beta” mode, as it were. This tool, which holds promise to produce impact metrics, is being developed by TRU and is in need of refinement and testing before it can be serviceable in an assessment and improvement process.
Section Five: Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability

Standard 5.A Mission Fulfillment

Standard 5.B: Adaptation and sustainability

The evaluation team finds evidence that TRU is monitoring and evaluating the adequacy of most aspects of its resources and capacity. This is illustrated by revenue projections, space utilization analysis, enrollment management, monitoring of IT infrastructure needs, and so on. As noted in our discussion of previous recommendation 1, further improvement is recommended to sufficiently assess institutional effectiveness with respect to achievement of its mission. However, the evaluators find that TRU is prepared and able to sustain operations for the time span (five years) most relevant to this assessment (5.B.1).

At the beginning of its five-year pre-accreditation cycle, TRU has documented a time schedule for ongoing planning, which shows progress toward compliance for Standard 5.B.2. In addition, the evaluation team finds that the planning improvements made in relation to previous Recommendation 4, and the increasing use of assessment data provided by its IPE office for ongoing improvement, provide important evidence of evolving compliance with this standard.

The evaluators find that TRU addresses both internal and external factors likely to affect its operations in the annual Institutional Accountability Plan and Report (IAPR) required by the Province. In review of the most recent IAPR, the evaluation team notes consistency between the institution’s assertions as contained in the Interim Candidacy Report and the IAPR.

In preparation of the Strategic Enrollment Monitoring plan, the institution reports that a more comprehensive environmental scan was also conducted; this process identified four main themes: 1) connection to the local and regional markets 2) increasing students in the wider national market 3) maintaining international student presence 4) continuing to serve lifelong learners.

As also discussed above, the evaluation team finds that the institution has set aside Strategic Investment funds to provide needed resources to key strategic areas. Formal assessment of the effectiveness of these investments in meeting their intended goals should be considered to provide additional data to inform the budget allocation process (5.B.3).
Summary

The evaluators find Thompson Rivers University to be well-positioned vis-a'-vis its candidacy for accreditation, and to have made considerable progress in a short period of time relative to the 5 recommendations addressed in the addenda section of their self-evaluation report. Importantly, the evaluation team finds the University’s faculty, staff and administrative leaders to share a common sense of institutional purpose and a broadly felt dedication to student-centered learning, student service, and community needs. Unified by this sense of purpose and commitment, and informed by attention to best practice research and its own data and analysis, the University demonstrates a proactive orientation and responsiveness to student needs, as was illustrated in the rapid and intentional improvements made to improve the course registration processes and technology. This commitment and responsiveness manifests itself in broad support for the very kind of frank self-assessment and continual improvement activities that regional accreditation requires and supports, establishing a strong foundation and substantial motivation for the institution’s accreditation activities.

As noted throughout this document, the evaluation team finds general education and student learning outcome assessment to be the key areas in which TRU must make further improvements in its effort to seek regional accreditation. In summary, we applaud TRU for its rapid progress and urge continued refinement and improvement concerning previous recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 5. To clarify both our praise and the improvements we recommend, we offer the following Commendations and Recommendations.

Commendations and Recommendations

COMMENDATIONS

1. The evaluation team commends Thompson Rivers University for successful programs that have engaged and supported hundreds of undergraduate students in research, as demonstrated by the annual Undergraduate Research and Innovation Conference, the Undergraduate Research Experience Awards, the Undergraduate Research Ambassadors Program, the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeships, and the Undergraduate Research Assistants program. Institutional commitment to research is also evidenced by recent growth in external funding, core theme 4, and multiple indicators of local, provincial and national support for the institution’s growing research agenda.

2. The evaluation team commends TRU’s commitment to serving its local communities. Evidence of this commitment includes a consistent message of sensitivity to and appreciation for the indigenous cultures in the region it serves as well as development of education and training programs responsive to community needs, such as the professional
science masters degrees offered on the Kamloops’ campus and the one-year certificate programs offered at Williams Lake.

3. The evaluation team commends TRU for the agility and intentionality with which it has enacted service, policy and process improvements, as demonstrated by the institution’s response to student complaints and frustrations concerning registration and course access. Recent improvements to streamline the registration process, to provide student-facing degree audit technologies, and to provide more centrally located and accessible enrollment support, represent informed and appropriate responses to the need for documented improvement in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. While noting a useful reduction in the number of Core Theme objectives and indicators, the evaluators find that several of the indicators remain framed as inputs rather than measurable accomplishments or outcomes. Therefore, the evaluators recommend that the institution continue to improve its definition of mission fulfillment by articulating measurable institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment (1.A).

2. The evaluation committee recommends that TRU demonstrate that the GE component of its undergraduate programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences, to help students develop the breadth and depth of intellect necessary to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment (2.C.9, 2.C.10).

3. The evaluators find that funding has been recently dedicated to the replacement and maintenance of technology infrastructure in TRU’s most recent budget; however, formalized planning for infrastructure replacement has not been completed. Consequently, the committee recommends that Thompson Rivers University develop a technology infrastructure replacement plan encompassing all its locations to ensure its ability to continue supporting its operations, programs and services (2.G.8).

4. The evaluation team recommends that the University build upon its efforts to document student learning outcomes by developing appropriate measurements of student learning, analyzing assessment results, and implementing action plans in a cycle of continuous improvement (Standard 4.A.3 and 4.B.2).

5. The evaluation team recommends that TRU articulate a policy governing the academic freedoms and responsibilities of all university employees (2.A.27).
6. TRU’s Board Manual (Chapter 12, Audit Committee Term of Reference, section 4.3) requires that the audit committee obtain reasonable assurances that TRU has implemented appropriate systems of internal control. Additionally, the NWCCU’s minimum requirements of Standard 2.F.4 include having a “description of internal financial controls.” As such, the evaluation team recommends that TRU document its system of internal financial controls (2.F.4).

7. The evaluation team recommends that TRU document the relationship between its general operations and its ancillary operations funds, including whether general operations funds are permitted to support ancillary enterprises or the use of funds from ancillary enterprises may be used to support general operations (2.F.6).
NWCCU Appoints Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, New President and CEO

April 2, 2018 - Redmond, WA—The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) announced today that Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, a prominent scientist, former university dean, and currently the director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), will assume the role of president and CEO of the organization in July 2018.

“Dr. Ramaswamy brings a compelling, heartfelt, and intelligent voice about the importance of higher education and its crucial role in society,” says NWCCU chair Dr. Joseph Brimhall, president of the University of Western States, who made the announcement following the decision by the Commission. “He has a deep passion for helping students reach for their aspirations through higher education, borne out of his own personal experience growing up with the support of a widowed mother determined that her children would experience a better life. He is committed to student success, high academic quality, accountability, and innovation. He has a proven record in creating collaborations and thriving partnerships with academic institutions and corporate and private sectors. He brings exceptional experience in working with legislative and executive branches at state and federal levels. We believe he has the values, vision, knowledge, and experience necessary to guide the NWCCU to meet its mission as our next president.”

Appointed by President Obama in 2012, Ramaswamy has directed NIFA to catalyze transformative discoveries, education, and engagement to solve societal challenges.

Former secretary for the United States Department of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack says, “To those fortunate to watch him in action tirelessly communicating the importance of food and agriculture science and education with members of Congress, the news media, associations, think tanks, science organizations, university faculties, farmers and producers, state legislators, USDA stakeholders, students at all levels, and most importantly, with scientists across the country, there is no question that his passion lies in bettering the public’s understanding of science and education.”

Prior to starting at NIFA, Ramaswamy served as dean of Oregon State University’s College of Agricultural Sciences; director of Purdue University’s Agricultural Research Programs; university distinguished professor and head of Kansas State University’s Entomology Department; and professor of entomology at Mississippi State University. He is widely published and an award-winning teacher and scholar, including being named Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and Fellow of the Entomological Society of America. As both a faculty member and administrator he served on institutional and programmatic peer-review teams that evaluated/accredited US-based and international institutions.
“The Northwest Commission is committed to assuring quality and effectiveness in postsecondary education and contributing to national progress on access and outcomes,” Ramaswamy says. “I am honored to be named to lead this significant and vital enterprise. I look forward to collaborating with member institutions, regional and national accrediting bodies, and many other stakeholders to communicate and reinforce the value of higher education to our nation’s preeminence and expand confidence in accreditation.”

“This is an important time for quality assurance in the United States as accreditors seek to accelerate improvement in higher education not only one institution at a time, but also across entire higher education sectors in every region of the country,” notes Barbara Gellman-Danley, chair of the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, a collective of seven regional organizations responsible for the accreditation of roughly 3,000 of the nation’s colleges and universities. “Dr. Ramaswamy’s experience in the federal government and academe will be a great asset to developing effective approaches to accreditation and measurement of institutional success to advance institutional and policymaker goals of helping a broader range of students complete degrees and credentials.”

NWCCU chair Brimhall states, “As he has done in each of the institutions he has previously served, Sonny will bring a competent and confident voice to the table and facilitate practices that will raise the bar for student outcomes, increase opportunities, and earn public trust.” Ramaswamy will succeed Dr. Marlene Moore, who has served as interim president since November 2017 following the retirement of Dr. Sandra Elman who was president for 21 years.

For more information about Dr. Ramaswamy and endorsements by leaders who know him, see the NWCCU website (www.nwccu.org).

NWCCU is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the authority on the educational quality and institutional effectiveness of higher education institutions in the Northwest region of the United States, including the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington, as well as Canada. NWCCU recognizes higher education institutions for performance, integrity, and quality to merit the confidence of the educational community and the public.

###
Student Course Evaluations—Principles and Procedures

Revised and Approved by Teaching and Learning Committee: February 2, 2018

The proposed revised Course Evaluation Principles and Procedures document was drafted to ensure it reflects the TRU Governance approval process, as well as incorporating issues identified by faculty members and operational services.

Background

Regular student feedback is important to ensure an effective student learning experience. As such, Senate adopted: “that student course evaluations will be carried out for all courses every time a course is offered” (December 16, 2013). The evaluation tool will consist of items that allow students to provide faculty members and Chairs with insight into their learning in individual courses. On March 23, 2015, the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) presented the February 3, 2015 draft of the Principles and Procedures document to Senate for information. This document included a proposed evaluation instrument. It was adopted that the evaluation instrument would include the four Senate-approved questions (February 22, 2016). In addition, at this meeting, was advised of the four bullet points below as part of the Principles & Procedures document regarding course evaluations:

- The administration of course evaluations will be undertaken by Institutional Planning and Analysis [now Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (IPE)] in conjunction with IT Services, and the distribution of reports to faculty and Chairs will be undertaken by Centre for Student Engagement and Learning Innovation [now Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)];

- The instructions for administering course evaluations will note the need for students to fill out the evaluation individually;

- Support will be provided for the education of all campus stakeholders on the appropriate use of formative course evaluations as one source of data for the formative evaluation of teaching effectiveness;

- Support will be provided for ongoing research into the process and products of course evaluation such that TRU can ensure that the process is fair and equitable for all faculty and students.

During the April 25, 2016 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) meeting, the Chair noted that APPC had referred the TLC Principles and Procedures document regarding course evaluation back to the Teaching and Learning Committee for revisions.
Memorandum of Settlement

In addition to the governance approval process noted above, a memorandum of settlement between TRU and the TRU Faculty Association (TRUFA) (July 21, 2015) outlines several procedural terms in regards to course evaluations, including:

- The Instructional Development and Support Committee (IDSC, now called the Teaching and Learning Committee) will provide departments with another opportunity to contribute questions to be considered in the development of a bank of questions, should they wish to do so. The IDSC will develop the final bank of core questions for use in the second section of the student evaluation questionnaire.

- The student evaluation questionnaire resulting from this process satisfies Article 7.3.7.2 (b) and Letter of Understanding No. 31.

- The collective agreement will apply in determining whether a student evaluation is formative or summative.

- Individual formative evaluation results will be provided to individual faculty members and their department Chair.

- Aggregate evaluation results will be provided to the University community.

- Deans may obtain the individual evaluation results for a specific faculty member.

- Student evaluation questionnaires are to be administered in class and the University will ensure that students have the necessary tools to complete the questionnaire.

- This settlement is without prejudice and without precedent.

- Nothing herein overrides the jurisdiction of Senate.
Principles and Procedures

Goals of Student Course Evaluations

1. To provide data to continuously improve student learning
2. To provide faculty members with information on their performance to enhance their effectiveness and instructional development
3. To provide data to assess program and course learning outcomes
4. To provide faculty members, departments, faculties, and the university with a source of data regarding students’ course and learning experiences.

Principles of Student Course Evaluations

Course evaluations instruments and procedures should:

1. Provide information that is student-centred
2. Provide information that is learning centred
3. Provide formative and continuous feedback to faculty members
4. Reflect the diversity of programs, course content, and course delivery
5. Provide data to assist in assessing program learning outcomes and useful aggregate data to the department, faculty, and institution.

1. **Student Centred**

Course evaluations are an important mechanism for students to provide feedback on their experience of learning in a course. They also provide students with an opportunity to summarize their experiences at the end of a course that can be used by faculty members to maximize the learning and success for their students in future offerings.

2. **Learning-Centred**

Student course evaluations should be viewed as learning-centred for the student and the faculty member. In other words, the procedures should enable a continuous learning model on the part of both students and faculty. For students, providing feedback develops the abilities to effectively reflect on and constructively comment on their experience in a course. For faculty, receiving feedback assists them to effectively reflect on and constructively respond to students' experiences and to provide space for them to situate their own teaching experiences of a course within the feedback from learners.

3. **Formative and Continuous Feedback**

TRU is committed to increasing student success (TRU Strategic Priorities 2009-2014). Student course evaluations are one important source of evidence for continuous improvement of teaching to increase student success. Others include, but are not limited to, course learning outcomes, peer review of teaching, receipt of teaching awards, scholarly studies of teaching practices, the scholarship of teaching and
learning, letters from students and colleagues, etc. (Gravestock & Gregor-Greenleaf, 2008). The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching will provide support for TRU in moving toward a continuous improvement model of teaching that includes resources, workshops and events for departments and individual faculty.

TRU Senate believes it is important for faculty to receive regular feedback from students on their experience of learning in TRU courses so has adopted: "student course evaluations will be carried out for all courses every time a course is offered."

4. Course Evaluation Instrument: Reflecting the Diversity of Programs

The course evaluation instrument (see Appendix A) will include the four Senate approved questions (Part I) and discipline specific questions (Part II). The discipline specific questions (normally, no more than 16, including two to three open-ended questions) provide departments with the opportunity to customize the instrument to reflect their discipline and/or course format/delivery.

Custom Questions Approval Process

Approval process for discipline specific custom questions:
1. Discuss custom questions as a department
2. Provide custom questions to the CELT for feedback
3. Submit custom questions to Faculty Council for approval
4. Provide approved custom questions to the CELT to distribute to IPE

Senate approved questions may only be modified in very specific circumstances. These modifications must retain intent and meaning of the original questions.

Approval process for changing four Senate approved questions:
1. Senate must submit request to Teaching and Learning Committee with recommended changes to senate-approved questions and rationale.
2. Teaching and Learning Committee will work with CELT to develop new or change current questions.
3. Teaching and learning committee will submit questions to APPC of Senate for approval
4. CELT will provide Senate approved questions to IPE

5. Data Use and Reporting

Student responses will be kept confidential. Course evaluation data will be stored on a secure server in Canada. This raw data is accessible only by some IPE staff. The course evaluation results will be analysed by Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (IPE) at the end of each administration cycle.

Individual faculty members will receive their course results (including both quantitative data and the comments provided by students) electronically and confidentially. Chairs will receive a copy of the results for each faculty member in their Schools/Departments.
Deans and Chairs receive an overall report on their Faculty. Upon request, Deans may obtain the individual evaluation results for a specific faculty member.

In addition to the Faculty-level reports, CELT, with the assistance of IPE, will report annually on institution level achievements and areas for improvement and provide Senate with institutional strategies co-developed with Deans for improvement (note: the course evaluation results will be considered along with other sources of student feedback like responses to National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) surveys and Canadian University Survey Consortium (C USC) surveys).

**Procedures**

**Administering the Evaluation Instrument**

Integrated Planning & Effectiveness (IPE) will administer the surveys and will place the links to course-specific surveys in students' MyTRU accounts.

Every faculty/school will receive a proposed list of course sections for evaluation from IPE prior to each administration cycle. Deans and Chairs will be asked to review and confirm the course lists, course instructors, and scheduled course dates prior to the specified due date. IPE will use the validated lists to administer the surveys and place the links to course-specific surveys in students' MyTRU accounts. This validation process is also important in disseminating reports to the faculty members.

For semester-based courses, the evaluations will be administered to students in the last three weeks of each term. Faculty members will build in time during a class within this period for students to complete the evaluations. Faculty members will decide and coordinate the exact date within this three-week period for the student course evaluation to occur. In cases where a course does not follow the typical semester format, this timeline can be altered, but only insofar as evaluations are meant to be completed toward the end of a course.

Faculty members will be provided with a password to unlock the link for the on-line surveys, which they will provide their students. They will also be provided with instructions for administering the evaluations. Communications with faculty members will occur through their individual TRU email accounts.

Course evaluation survey links for regular semester-based courses will be available via students' MyTRU accounts. For exceptions and courses that do not follow the semester schedule, survey links will be distributed to the faculty member's TRU email account.

Faculty members should ensure that students are aware of the evaluation date. Students will complete the surveys individually, online, using an appropriate electronic device (e.g., laptop, tablets, Smart phone, etc.). Student devices do not require a data plan, but the device must have Wi-Fi capabilities.

Faculty members should:
Inquire if students have access to such a device and request they bring it to class on the day of the Student Course Evaluation.

Inform students that electronic devices can be signed out from the TRU library for use.

Faculty members may also consider:

- Signing out devices from CELT for student use. These will need to be booked in advance and returned promptly.
- Booking time in a computer lab – this may be worth considering if there are a large number of students without in-class access to a device.

On the day of the evaluation:

1. Students should be informed of the importance of course evaluations and that their feedback allows faculty members to continuously improve their teaching to support the learning for future students.

2. Faculty members administering the evaluation will provide instructions to students. Please note, these instructions are guidelines – language can be modified to suit the teaching style/philosophy and course context.

3. Students should be informed that they have at least 10 minutes to complete the survey.

4. Students should be reminded, as per the instructions, to complete the survey independently. Students are encouraged to submit feedback on their own learning experience when completing the Student Course Evaluation.

5. Students should be provided with the password which was sent to faculty members, to open the survey.

6. Faculty should remain unobtrusive during the completion of the evaluations.

Students who are absent from class will have the opportunity to complete the Student Course Evaluation within 48 hours from the time it is first administered in class ("unlocked"), and will need to obtain the necessary password from the faculty member. The first valid response received starts this 48 hour period. Responses will only be included in reporting if submitted within this 48-hour period.

Students with disabilities will be accommodated in compliance with BRD 10-0.

Faculty members may administer the Student Course Evaluation themselves or choose to have a colleague administer it.
**Course Evaluation Reports**

Evaluation reports will not be available until final grades are submitted, typically within three weeks of the grade due date.

Courses that receive less than five complete evaluations will not be distributed.

In cases where course sections are regularly scheduled with fewer than 10 students, if requested by the Dean’s office, the results of multiple sections (for the same faculty member and course) may be combined to allow for a report to be produced.

Evaluation reports will be compiled by IPE and provided to faculty members electronically and confidentially.

Reports will be retained in a secure electronic form by the university for seven years before being deleted. Faculty who wish to keep their reports for more than seven years must make a local electronic or paper copy (See Record Retention Schedule).

**Faculty Assistance**

Questions regarding the administration of the survey can be addressed to IPE at crsevaladmin@tru.ca. Questions regarding the student course evaluation process, the survey instrument or the instructions can be addressed to the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at celt@tru.ca. CELT also provides constructive feedback to faculty members about their reports at their request and offers a full range of consultative supports for teaching.


**Ongoing Review**

To ensure that the implementation of student course evaluations effectively addresses the principles set forth in this document, the procedures outlined here will be revisited every 3 years by the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee and necessary adjustments made in consultation with TRU stakeholders.
MEMORANDUM

To: Senate and Standing Committees of Senate
From: Christine Bovis-Cnossen, Chair APPC
Re: Process for moving a program/course into abeyance
Date: April 12, 2018

Executive Summary

“Abeyance” refers to suspension of a program/course for a specific timeframe and is different from a deletion (which has a clear process).

Currently, the process/procedure for moving a program/course into abeyance is not clearly articulated and limited consultation, if any, occurs with APPC and PCOL. Most recently, the practice has included the following steps:

- The dean, at the request of the department chair, sends an email to epc@tru.ca requesting a program/course to be placed in abeyance.
- The program/course is then placed in abeyance in curricUNET.
- A notification is sent to the Calendar and Banner representatives.

The same process occurs for bringing a program/course back from abeyance to active.

Concerns with Current Practice
The current practice does not respect the terms of reference for APPC and PCOL, thus a change needs to occur.

Future Procedure for Moving a Program/Course into Abeyance
Faculty Councils maintain jurisdiction over decisions regarding their academic programing; this includes the decision to move a program/course into abeyance. APPC, PCOL and Senate have authority over program approvals, revision and deletions, and abeyance is considered a revision of a program/course as it changes the delivery of the program/course. In accordance with Senate, APPC, and PCOL terms of reference, consultation must occur before the abeyance is enacted.

The following steps outline the process to move a program/course to abeyance status:

1. The department discusses and formally votes on a notice of motion regarding the abeyance.
2. Departmental decision is brought to Faculty Council for discussion and approval (notice of motion and formal vote).
3. The dean sends a memo (see template) to APPC and PCOL (only if an OL program/course) for information purposes, outlining the program/course they wish to have go into abeyance. The memo will include the following items:

   a) Program/course title, acronym, and number
   b) Rationale for abeyance
   c) Proposed timeframe for abeyance including an effective start date
   d) Target date for review to bring the program/course out of abeyance, e.g. “This will be reviewed within 2 years.”
   e) List of departments that will be impacted and those that have been consulted, e.g. Library, TRU World, Registrar, etc.
   f) Plans to ensure current students can complete program/course

4. APPC (PCOL) invite the Dean (or representative) to discuss the memo and rationale.
5. APPC (PCOL) brings the memo forward to Senate for information.
6. Program/course is placed into abeyance in Curricunet on the date indicated in the memo.

Attached:
- Sample memo template
MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Planning and Priorities Committee of Senate
[Planning Council for Open Learning]

From: [Dean], [Faculty/School]

Re: Notification of Abeyance, [Program/Course Title, Acronym, and Number]

Date: [Date]

Rationale for Abeyance

Proposed Timeframe for Suspension of Delivery

Effective Start Date of Abeyance Status

Target Date for Review

List of Departments that will be Impacted

List of Departmental Consultations

Plans for Current Students to Complete Program/Course
PROGRAM POLICIES

1. Communication Method in the Program

Faculty will communicate with students through Moodle, either through their individual courses or through the Respiratory Student Center. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they check their Moodle emails daily or have these emails sent to their personal email accounts. Students should use their myTRU email address for communicating with faculty. Please, no personal email address since this could result in the email being deleted.

2. Diploma Completion Requirements

The diploma program completion is expected within 3 consecutive years following entry and cannot exceed 4 consecutive years.

3. RT Diploma / BHSc Completion

The dual stream (diploma & BHSc) program completion is expected within 4 consecutive years following entry. The RT diploma portion cannot exceed 5 consecutive years.

4. Open-Learning (OL) Courses for the Fast-Track Program

Note: the application of TRU-OL courses (RESP 1761, RESP 1781, HLTH 1981 and HLTH 2511) to the Respiratory Therapy Program is limited to RT Fast-track students. Other students may be granted transfer credit under special circumstances but only with the permission of the Department Chairperson.

a. Even though OL allows up to 8 months for course completion there are specific completion date requirements for OL courses taken as equivalent to on-site courses in the RT Program. For fast-track students taking the pre-requisite OL courses, it is strongly recommended that these courses be completed prior to starting the program on campus. If the student anticipates being unable to complete these OL courses by this date, the student should contact the Academic Coordinator to discuss the situation. Based on the discussion with the Academic Coordinator, certain options will be available to the student.

If the student has one OL course that they have not completed prior to start of the fall semester and the student would like to continue as a Fast-track student, the student must write the final exam within the TRU-OL September final examination period (usually the 1st week of Sept) and successfully complete the course at that time. Failure to successfully complete the OL course is treated in the same manner as an on-site course failure.
**Note:** students must register for their final exam one month prior to the exam date (see Course Guide of your TRU-OL course(s)).

b. A mark of $\geq 60\%$ on the final examination with a grade of $\geq 60\%$ overall is required in an OL course in order for transfer/advanced credit to be granted in the Respiratory Therapy Program.

5. **Promotion Policy**

**Academic Years**

In order to be promoted to the next semester of the program, a student must successfully complete all courses in each semester or have met the Academic Probation criteria. Whereas a minimal passing grade for a course at TRU is 50\%, successful completion of the RESP courses, overall RESP lab practicals, PHYS 1580, and BIOL 1592/1692 require an overall grade of C and a minimum mark of 50\% on the final exam. A grade below these requirements is considered a failure. A student who does not achieve a minimal passing grade may be allowed to continue on a probationary basis if the student is granted academic probation (AP).

If a student does not meet the Academic Probation criteria or gets less than a C in two courses, they will be removed from the program. If this is a first-time failure, the information provided under Program Re-entry applies (see #7). If this is a second-time failure, then due to program duration being exceeded, the student will be unable to return to the program (see #2 and #3).

**Clinical Year**

The clinical year curriculum consists of the three clinical theory courses and three clinical practice courses. The student is required to pass all six courses in order to successfully complete the program.

The grading system for the three clinical theory courses (RTCT) is the same letter grade system used for TRU’s academic courses. The pass mark, academic probation, and promotion criteria for the three clinical theory courses are the same as described above.

Students who pass a clinical practice course receive a COM [complete] for that course whereas students who are unsuccessful in passing the clinical practice course receive a NCG [no credit granted]. Only students who receive a COM are eligible to continue in the program.

The clinical practice course objectives are listed in the Clinical Logbook that each student receives when they enter clinical year. The students must be capable of consistently meeting all clinical year objectives at the end of each clinical practice course.
During the clinical practice course, the student will receive two evaluations: one at midpoint, which is a formative evaluation, and the other, the summative evaluation, which is at the end of the course. These formal reports detail the student’s progress to date and identify any areas of weakness that must be addressed in order for the student to successfully complete the course. In addition, a developmental plan may be delivered to the student along with either of these formal reports or at any time in the clinical year if issues or areas for improvement are identified.

The developmental plan, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation documents all follow a format that grades the student’s performance in categories that are based on the categories in the Clinical Logbook. In terms of the adult-based courses, the objectives are very similar in the two courses.

The major difference between RTCL 3110 and RTCL 3120, is that in RTCL 3120 the students are (1) expected to handle an increased patient load and (2) work with minimal to no supervision by the end of Level Two.

6. **Academic Probation (AP)**

   **Criteria**

   Normally a student is required to attain a final grade of at least C and ≥ 50% on the final exam in all RESP, PHYS and BIOL courses during a semester in order to continue in the program. A student will be allowed to continue in the program under Academic Probation when he/she attains a final grade of C- and/or < 50% on the final exam in one of the above courses, as long as a passing grade is achieved in all other courses in that semester.

   A student will be allowed to continue in the program under Academic Probation when they attain a final grade of C- in a RESP, PHYS or BIOL course during a semester and/or < 50% on the final exam in the above courses, as long as a passing grade is achieved in all other courses in that semester.

   If a student receives two C- grades in a semester, and it is their first time on AP, they may be allowed to continue in the program, providing there is an equivalent distance course available for at least one of the courses the student failed. The student will be allowed to continue on to the next semester on AP, providing they successfully pass (≥ 60% on the final exam and ≥ 60% in the course overall) at least one of the equivalent distance courses within the time frame determined by the RT Program.

   If a student receives a mark less than a C- in a course during one semester, they have failed and will be withdrawn from the program. Academic Probation does not apply to a mark less than C-. Students may apply for re-entry, if 1st time failure, in accordance with the information provided in #7. If the student is accepted back into the program, they will be on AP for the first semester upon their return, and the AP policy applies.
If a student is placed on AP for the following semester, they MUST pass all the courses and final exams according to the promotion policy. If the student does not meet the criteria, they will be removed from the program. AP cannot occur two semesters in a row.

7. Program Re-entry

a. Following didactic academic failure:

A student who receives a failing grade in a course related to a professional issue as outlined in the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (CSRT) code of ethics and standards of practice (See Appendix 4) may be refused re-admission to the program.

Students, who have failed or withdrawn from a course and/or program, should recognize that there is no guarantee of the opportunity to repeat the on-site courses. Students may be given the option of:
   a. repeating the course(s) by distance study if equivalent course(s) is/are available. The requirements for course completion and promotion to the next semester are stated in #6.

   b. re-entering the program the following year if space is available and repeating the course(s) required. They will be placed on AP for the 1st semester of their return, and the AP policy applies. All courses that have a lab component must be repeated.

b. Following a failure in the clinical year:

A student may re-enter clinical the following year if all of the following are met:

   • They have not been deemed clinically unsafe. A student is deemed clinically unsafe when they have compromised patient safety by either their action or inaction in a clinical setting as determined by the Clinical Site Coordinator and the Program Clinical Coordinator in consultation with the Respiratory Therapy Department Professional Practice Leader.
   • Have had no previous failures.
   • Clinical space is available.
   • They have completed all required upgrading. Upgrading may include completion of distance study courses, TRU on-site courses and/or counselling as deemed appropriate by the Clinical Coordinator.
   • An affiliated clinical hospital is willing to accept them.

A developmental plan will be put in place for any student re-entering the clinical year after a failure. If the student is starting at a different site from where the failure took place, the plan will be developed by both the receiving and original Clinical Site
Coordinator (CSC). The Clinical Coordinator will have a copy of this developmental plan.

A second failure in clinical year will result in removal from the program. Failure to successfully complete the distance study option is not considered a second failure.

c. **Order of Program Re-entry**

When there is a waiting list of repeating students, the following represents prioritized criteria for re-admission.

- Available seating. A semester will not be overloaded to accommodate repeating students.
- How far a student has progressed in the program without failure.
- G.P.A., if all else is equal.
- Number of students applying from outside the program with advanced credits (e.g. fast-track).

**Examples**

1. Student #1 fails third semester and student #2 fails fourth semester in the same year. If both apply to third semester, but only one seat is available, student #2 is given priority.

2. Student #1 fails third semester, while student #2 fails second semester. Student #2 takes a distance make-up course and raises grade to a pass. If both apply to third semester, but only one seat is available, student #1 is given priority.

8. **Professionalism**

Our program’s goal is to prepare highly competent respiratory care practitioners to work in all areas of RT practice. Integral to the practice of Respiratory Therapy is the need to abide by the principles of ethical and professional behaviour and thus students are expected to adhere to the CSRT principles of ethical and professional conduct. The program has a duty to ensure students graduating from the program meet the standards of TRU and the profession.

9. **Examinations**

No cell phones, programmable calculators, or other electronic devices, paper dictionaries or translating devices are allowed to be used on midterms or final exams. These aids are permissible during lectures and/or labs. Each student in the program is responsible for having a non-programmable calculator. RT faculty will not be able to provide these for you students.

10. **Attendance**
Attendance in **all lectures (on and off campus) and labs** is necessary for effective learning and to ensure students develop the required competencies of a competent practicing Respiratory Therapist. **Promptness in lecture and lab** is a courtesy to both faculty and students. Admission to a lecture or lab may be refused by the instructor for lateness, class misconduct or failure to complete assigned work. It is recommended that students contact Program Faculty in a proactive manner in the event of any absences or lateness. The Program adheres to TRU’s Student Attendance Policy ED 3-1: [http://www.tru.ca/policy.html or see Appendix 5](http://www.tru.ca/policy.html).

### 11. Criminal Record Check

RT Program students are required to undergo a criminal record check once they’ve been accepted into the program. The Criminal Record Check (CRC) consent form will be sent to the student by the Admissions office once acceptance into the program has occurred. The completed CRC consent form is then emailed to resp@tru.ca with two pieces of photo id (preferred id: a copy of a valid driver’s license plus one other piece of photo identification) by Sept 30 at the latest. A $28.00 CRC charge will be added to a designated RESP course by the Finance department. The student does NOT need to submit $28. A criminal check is completed by the Ministry and a Clearance Letter is sent to the Resp. department to be kept on file. It is valid for 5 years. Students may request the Clearance letter directly from the Ministry during this 5 year period if transferring schools or employment purposes etc. or for other personal reasons at no cost to the student.

Students **with criminal convictions may not be eligible for** the RT program **will have to undergo a criminal record check before entering the clinical year**, since hospitals and other practice agencies have the right to bar individuals with criminal records from practicing respiratory care in their agencies. Our clinical affiliates require a criminal record check prior to hiring of new graduates or accepting students for clinical placement, and **may reserve the right to** refuse to accept students **with a criminal record who are deemed to present a risk to children or vulnerable adults based on the result of the criminal record check**. Not completing the **clinical placement in the clinical year** would prevent a student from successfully completing the program. The Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapy and the provincial colleges of Respiratory Therapy may deny student membership and/or RT registration to candidates with criminal convictions.

### 12. HSPNet

The Health Sciences Placement Network (HSPnet) is a secure web-enabled application that is used by several jurisdictions in Canada. The HSPnet database contains information about students in clinical placements within health agencies and other locations. Students authorize their educational program to use and disclose their personal information (name, student profile) and to use (but not disclose) their personal health information via HSPnet for the purpose of locating and coordinating placements as required for an educational program by signing the
HSPnet consent form. This document provides a summary of the national HSPnet Policies on Privacy, Security and Data Access, relating to the protection of student information within HSPnet. The full Policies can be viewed on the HSPnet website at www.hspcanada.net.

13. Immunization

Students will be asked are required to have their immunizations up to date, and provide proof of immunization upon acceptance into the program. Immunization forms will be sent to the student by Admissions once the student is accepted into the Program. These Immunization forms need to be completed and then e-mailed to resp@tru.ca by Sept. 30 at the latest. Students will are expected to undergo immunization for Hepatitis B (Heptavax) before entering clinical year. Students will be required to show proof of up to date immunization before being allowed into the clinical year. Please contact a Public Health nurse for more information.

A student may decline immunization to be immunized as recommended due to religious reasons, the RT Program will accept that as a student’s right. However, Health Authorities may require immunization for participation in certain clinical rotations, this may put the student in jeopardy of not being able to graduate from the program. Clinical rotations, including observation hours in your the academic year, require students to be which typically take place in a hospital setting. As such, the Health Authorities may limit or deny a student clinical time and since completion of this time is a requirement to graduate, the student may be at risk of not being able to do so. A student’s inability to participate in such clinical activities could delay the student’s graduation from the program, as alternate clinical rotations would have to be completed if and when they are available. The reason for the Health Authorities’ stance on the immunization requirement is not only to protect your students, but also your patients.

Note: if CRC consent forms and/or Immunization records are not submitted on time, the student may be in jeopardy of not being able to choose their clinical rotation sites. They will be chosen for you.

14. N95 mask fits for clinical year

Prior to entry into the clinical year, all students must be fit-tested for N95 masks, which are worn during many patient procedures. The clinical coordinator typically arranges for a company to provide fit testing on campus for the pre-clinical students at a cost of approximately $20, which is paid by the student. Alternatively, students can choose to be fit-tested by anyone authorized to provide fit-testing for the N95 mask.

Proper fitting requires the student to be clean shaven. If a student is unable to be clean shaven, they may be required to purchase a powered air respirator purifier
(PAPR) at a cost of approximately $1000. Using a PAPR instead of N95 masks during patient care can make organization of workload more difficult in the clinical year.
MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: Christine Bovis-Cnossen, Chair APPC

Re: Classification of Categories for Curricular Changes

Date: April 12, 2018

Purpose
To ensure clarity in the TRU governance approval flow, APPC requests that Senate and Standing Committees of Senate use consistent practices to classify curricular category changes.

Background
2006
At the September 25, 2006 meeting of Senate, recommendations regarding Senate committees and academic approval processes, along with 10 Notices of Motion were presented in the Report of the ad hoc Committee of University Council for the Review of Academic Decision-Making & Standing Committee Structure. Following discussion, Senate passed a motion to “… formally receive the report of the ad hoc Review Committee.”

On October 11, 2006, Senate held a special meeting and passed the following motion (formerly the 10th notice of motion in the September 25, 2006 document):

That Senate agrees in principle with the recommendations of the ad hoc Committee of University Senate for the Review of Academic Decision-Making and Standing Committee Structure for revisions to the approval procedures for curricular change and directs the Steering Committee, in consultation with the Educational Programs Committee, to develop a detailed proposal for Senate's approval.

The definition of each category was contained within the recommended approval procedures; however, Senate did not formally approve the category definitions for curricular change at that time.

2011
At the May 24, 2011 meeting of Senate, APPC submitted to Senate for information the Operating Procedures of EPC for the Review and Approval of Submissions – a document outlining EPC’s academic approval process as well as categories of curricular changes. Minutes indicate that the report was accepted as information only.
At this same meeting, APPC also submitted a notice of motion for changes to policy ED 8-2 Undergraduate Course and Program Approvals. The policy included the following wording:

- **EPC will receive all Category I changes (as defined by Senate)...**
- **EPC will receive all Category II changes (as defined by Senate)...**
- **EPC will receive all Category III changes (as defined by Senate)...**
- **The APPC will receive all Category III changes (as defined by Senate)...**

The policy was approved at the September 26, 2011 Senate meeting, yet there is no paper trail for the approval of the categories as presented by APPC.

**2017**

At the September 25, 2017 meeting of Senate, the revised *EPC Procedures* were approved. The *EPC Procedures* refer to three (3) Senate-approved categories of curricular changes: Category I, II, and III. These categories are also referenced in TRU policy ED 8-2.

*Present*

The *EPC Procedures* received Senate approval in 2017; however, there is no documentation affirming that the categories, as previously presented in 2006 and 2011, are approved by Senate.

**Action Item**

APPC to approve and recommend to Senate for approval, the definitions for Category I, II, and III curricular changes as detailed in the attached document, *Definition of Categories*.

Please note, the attached *Definition of Categories* document formalizes the intent of the 2006 and 2011 categories of curricular changes documents. No bullets have been added or deleted, instead they have been reformatted for clarity.
## DEFINITION OF CATEGORIES

### Category I

Defined as those curricular changes approved at the Faculty Council level. These consist of minor changes that have very little or no impact on the students/programs within the Faculty/School/Division. All costs associated with these changes will be covered within the Academic Division.

The changes must be reported to EPC and the Registrar’s Office through curricuNET, and are implemented after EPC reports them to Senate for information only.

- Minor change to a course title
- Minor change to the calendar description (does not change intent of course)
- Minor change to course learning outcomes/content
- Change to method of evaluation
- Change to the following when they do not affect students or programs:
  - Total number of credits for a course
  - Vectoring of a course
  - Pre-requisites or co-requisites of a course
  - Scheduling
  - Admission quotas for a course

### Category II

Defined as those curricular changes that require EPC review and all costs associated with the changes are covered by the Faculty/School/Division.

These changes are reported by EPC to Senate for information only.

- New course
- Course deletion
- Change to the following when it affects students or programs:
  - Method of delivery
  - Number of credits for a course
  - Vectoring of a course
  - Scheduling of a course
  - Pre-requisites and co-requisites for course or program
- Level of course (e.g. moving from 3000 to 2000 level)
- Approved electives for a program
- Minor program change (e.g. substituting different course for required course)
- Addition or deletion of a requirement within an approved program
- Addition of a new field of specialization at the minor level if there is already a major in the same field of specialization
- Addition or deletion of non-credit programs or programs offered under service contracts, if the costs associated with these will be covered by the academic unit making the proposal
DEFINITION OF CATEGORIES

**Category III**

Defined as curricular changes that require Senate and/or Board and/or DQAB approval and other curricular changes that may require additional university resources.

- Course or program revisions that require new resources beyond those currently provided by the Faculty/School/Division
- New programs
- Program deletions
- New field of specialization at the major or honours level, or minor level if there is not an approved major in the same area
- Deletion of a field of specialization at the major or honours level
- Changes to the majority of the courses in an approved program
- Changes to requirements for admission to programs, promotion or graduation, especially those that may affect enrollments
- Changes in admission quotas
- Change in residency requirement for a program
- Addition or deletion of non-credit programs or programs offered under service contracts when there are resource implications for the university
1. Dr. C. Bovis-Cnossen, Provost and Vice-President Academic advised BCOS that the 2018/19 Budget and Domestic Tuition Fee increase were approved by the Board of Governors on March 23, 2018.

2. Dr. C. Bovis-Cnossen, Provost and Vice-President Academic advised BCOS that SIF proposals have been approved and letters of award were sent to the budget holders.

3. TRUSU submitted an update letter to BCOS on the Student Budget Consultation Process. The TRUSU Student Budget Consultation Report for 18/19 and TRU Responses can be found on the BCOS sharepoint website:
   https://one.tru.ca/committee/budget/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/Documents/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fcommittee%2Fbudget%2FDocuments%2FTRUSU%20Student%20Budget%20Consultation%20Reports%2F2018%2019&FolderCTID=0x0120005CD6C232A601F842861D54E8B2C121C8&View=%7B37B37B3235C-EB9B-4A76-AE54-87A56BAD459D%7D&InitialTabId=Ribbon%20ERead&VisibilityContext=WSSTabPersistence

4. Dr. C. Bovis-Cnossen, Provost and Vice-President Academic provided an update of new positions to support student success: Financial Aid & Awards – Awards Officer, Academic Advising – Audit and Articulation Officer, Advancement - Fundraiser.

5. M. Milovick, Vice-President Administration and Finance provided an update that parking fees are frozen for 18/19. More parking spots will be added to the overall inventory by January 2019. Food Service review has commenced. A consultant will be hired to conduct the review in the Fall.

Next BCOS meeting is May 8, 2018
Educational Programs Committee (EPC)
Report to Senate for April 2018

Based on the proceedings of the April 4, 2018 meeting of the Educational Programs Committee (EPC), the following approvals are reported to Senate for information purposes:

a) **New Courses:**
   i. ENGL 3291 Contemporary Children’s and Young Adult Fiction
   ii. ENGL 3991 The Voices of Protest and Rebellion in Contemporary American Literature
   iii. EPHY 2300 Digital Electronics

b) **Course Modifications:**
   i. ADVG 1020 Wilderness Travel
   ii. ADVG 1510 Flatwater Canoe Instructor
   iii. ADVG 1530 Kayak 1
   iv. ADVG 1580 Mountaineering 1
   v. ADVG 1590 Avalanche Safety for Ski Operations Level 1
   vi. ADVG 1900 Expedition 1
   vii. ADVG 2040 Business of Adventure
   viii. ADVG 2060 Legal Liability & Risk Management
   ix. ADVG 2070 Ocean Surfing 1
   x. ADVG 2240 Top Rope Climbing Instructor
   xi. ADVG 2260 Ocean Surf 2
   xii. ADVG 2270 Ocean Surf 3
   xiii. ADVG 2430 Assistant Hiking Guide
   xiv. ADVG 2510 Moving Water Canoe
   xv. ADVG 2530 Kayak 3
   xvi. ADVG 2560 Nordic Ski Instructor 1
   xvii. ADVG 2570 Ski Tour 2
   xviii. ADVG 2580 Guide Training Skiing-Touring
   xix. ADVG 2620 Rope Rescue Technician 1
   xx. ADVG 2630 Rope Rescue Technician 2
   xxi. ADVG 2640 Sea Kayaking 1
   xxii. ADVG 2650 Sea Kayaking 2
   xxiii. ADVG 2652 Sea Kayak 3
   xxiv. ADVG 2660 River Rafting 1
   xxv. ADVG 2750 River Rafting 2
   xxvi. ADVG 2780 Sea Kayak 4
   xxvii. ADVG 2790 Ski Tour 3
   xxviii. ADVG 2800 Rock Climbing 3 – Multi-pitch
xxix. ADVG 2860 Ski Guide
xxx. ADVG 2870 Rock Guide
xxxi. ADVG 2890 Alpine Guide
xxxii. ADVG 4130 Adventure Field School
xxxiii. MDLB 1991 Laboratory Practicum – Evaluation of National Competencies
xxxiv. HIST 1121 Canadian History to 1867
xxxv. HIST 1221 Post-Confederation Canadian History
xxxvi. MDLB 1721 Lab Practicum – Evaluation of Competencies
xxxvii. PHIL 1111 Introduction to Critical Thinking

c) **Course Deletion:**
i. MDLB 1411 Digital Electronics

Approved curricular changes can be viewed on CurricUNET at [https://www.curricunet.com/TRU/index.cfm](https://www.curricunet.com/TRU/index.cfm). Hover over the “Search” tab and select “Course”. Proposals can be accessed by entering the course title or subject acronym and number. Select the “Active” version of the proposal (red text) and choose the “AF” Report to view the full course document or the “CC” Report to view what was modified. Icons to select the AF and CC Reports are located to the left of the proposal title.

Respectfully submitted by: Dr. David Hill, Chair
Date: April 23, 2018 Educational Programs Committee
1. **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

The Steering Committee recommends the following volunteers for appointment by Senate:

**a. Budget Committee**
Dean:
- Baldev Pooni, Trades & Technology

**b. Educational Programs Committee**
Dean:
- Airini, Faculty of Education and Social Work

**c. Graduate Studies Committee**
Dean:
- Michael Henry, School of Business and Economics

**d. Teaching and Learning Committee**
Dean:
- Tom Dickinson, Faculty of Science

**e. Research Committee**
Deans:
- Donna Murnaghan, Faculty of Nursing
- Brad Morse, Faculty of Law

**f. Awards and Honours Committee**
Faculty Senator:
- G. Rudolph, Open Learning
Faculty:
- S. Miles, School of Business and Economics

**g. Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (“ESAC”)**
Faculty:
- Bala Nikku, Education and Social Work

**h. Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (“APPC”)**
OLFM:
- Amy Tucker, OLFM
i. **Sabbatical Leave Committee**
   Faculty:
   • Margaret Hall, Law

j. **Academic Integrity Committee ("AIC")**
   Dean:
   • Brenda Mathenia, Librarian

   Open Learning Representative:
   • Wilma De Jong

   Graduate Student:
   • Mario Reyes Castro

2. **TRUSU Student Nominations**

   The Steering Committee approves the February 21, 2018 list of student nominations. This will be provided to Senate for information.

3. **TRUFA replacement nomination University Appeals Committee ("UAC")**

   The Committee reviewed the TRUFA replacement nomination for the UAC pursuant to Article 6.9.4 of the TRUFA Collective Agreement.

   On Motion duly made and adopted, it was RESOLVED to advise Senate to approve the following replacement to the University Appeals Committee:
   • **Ruby Dhand**, Faculty of Law (to replace Peter Murphy)

4. **Accreditation Steering Committee ("ASC") Revisions to Terms of Reference ("ToR") of Senate Standing Committees**: First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs, International Affairs, Research, Student Engagement and Environmental Sustainability Advisory.

   Formation of a Sub-Committee of First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs Committee (FNAAC) and International Affairs Committee (SIAC): **Intercultural Understanding**

   The Steering Committee of Senate recommends approval of the changes in the Terms of Reference requested by the Accreditation Steering Committee. The proposed terms of reference are attached along with a memo dated March 27, 2018.

5. **Triennial Self Evaluation Report from the Steering Committee**

   Donald Lawrence, Chair of Research Committee of Senate, attended to discuss the completed Triennial Report.

   Professor Lawrence reported that everything was generally good, although the committee recommends, where possible, that the staff member be someone on
campus who is significantly engaged in the research culture of the University. Likewise, it would be best if student members were research oriented, as they will be more engaged and interested. The Research committee has seen a range of student attendance. Some students attend but are not engaged, whereas some students are very engaged. Professor Lawrence supports making a presentation to TRUSU about student attendance and engagement. Professor Lawrence further noted that meeting quorum requirement was not an issue.

D. Lawrence confirmed that the Research Committee reports to Senate twice per year and reporting once a year, in April, would be preferred.

Respectfully submitted,

Ehsan Latif, Ph.D.
Chair, Steering Committee
Student Caucus
Alex McLellan, University Governance Coordinator, Thompson Rivers University Students' Union

Appointments to University Committees
Wednesday, February 21, 2018

At the February 16, 2018 meeting of the Thompson Rivers University Students' Union Executive, the following students were nominated to serve on the following university committees. As noted, the nominees are to serve the remainder of the term made vacant by withdrawal or abandonment by respective previous appointees. The Students’ Union requests that the Steering Committee consider these nominees at its next meeting to facilitate their timely participation in governance meetings.

### Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of term to Sep 30, 2018</td>
<td>Melinda Fernandes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing</td>
<td>Mauricio Castro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Budget Committee

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of term to Sep 30, 2018</td>
<td>Angelina Korobkina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing</td>
<td>Manisha Gupta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Educational Programs Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of term to Sep 30, 2018</td>
<td>Karthick Venkatachalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing</td>
<td>Swagatam Majumdar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of term to Sep 30, 2018</td>
<td>Anushrin Kohli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing</td>
<td>Faren Charania</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graduate Studies Committee

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of term to Sep 30, 2018</td>
<td>Janelle Paulson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing</td>
<td>Aksa Mughal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### International Affairs Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of term to Sep 30, 2018</td>
<td>Raj Soni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing</td>
<td>Ajay Luther</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee of Senate

FROM: Donna Petri, Associate Vice President Academic
       Matt Kennedy, Accreditation Liaison Officer
       Christine Bovis-Nossen, Chair of First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs
       Baihua Chadwick, Chair of International Affairs
       Donald Lawrence, Chair of Research
       Christine Adam, Chair of Student Engagement
       James Gudjonson, Chair of Sustainability

DATE: March 27, 2018

RE: Revisions to Senate Sub-Committee Terms of Reference

Summary
The Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) is tasked with overseeing accreditation through the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), including providing opportunities for dialogue among faculty, staff, administration and students. The committee has direct reporting and is supported through the Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic (Provost). ASC asked Senate Steering Committee about adding a term of reference related to mission fulfilment to four senate sub-committees and forming a fifth sub-committee.

The recommendation from Steering is that the Accreditation Steering Committee Chair meet with the Chairs of the Senate sub-committees in question to agree upon recommended language for each sub-committee's terms of reference, and then a combined proposal come to Steering jointly from the ASC as well as the Senate sub-committee Chairs. Steering would then recommend to Senate for approval.

Currently, the ASC reports to the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) of Senate through the Provost. The Provost, who also chairs APPC, reports to Senate on all items related to NWCCU accreditation.

Figure 1: Reporting Flow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senate Sub-Committee</th>
<th>ASC</th>
<th>APPC</th>
<th>Senate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report:</td>
<td>via ALO</td>
<td>→ via Provost</td>
<td>→ via Provost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

006
In this flow, sub-committees report to ASC, for consultation.

Proposed terms of reference wording

To advise the Accreditation Steering Committee and report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme Intercultural understanding.

Attached

- Terms of Reference for the following standing committees of Senate:
  - Research
  - Student Engagement
  - Sustainability
  - First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs (FNAAC)
  - International Affairs (SIAC)

- Terms of Reference for a proposed Intercultural Understanding sub-committee of both FNAAC and SIAC.
Research

Terms of Reference

Responsibilities of the Research Committee:

- Advise Senate on policies and programs that promote, support and celebrate high quality research and scholarly work and its dissemination
- Advise Senate on policies and practices on ethical, regulatory and other issues related to the conduct of research and scholarly work and its dissemination
- Advise senate on opportunities and challenges associated with external funding of research and scholarly work
- Advise Senate on policies and procedures for the allocation and awarding of University funds for research and scholarly work
- Review, consult with the Budget Committee and advise the Academic Planning & Priorities Committee on proposals to establish new research centres or institutes or new research chairs or professorships
- Review annually the activities of the University's research centres or institutes
- Review annually the University's Strategic Research Plan and make recommendations to the Senate
- Report annually to Senate on the University's research and scholarly activities
- Establish such subcommittees as needed to fulfil the Committee's responsibilities
- Other duties as assigned by Senate

To advise the Accreditation Steering Committee and report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme Research.

Membership:

Chair:

- A voting faculty member of the Committee, nominated by the Committee and approved by Senate

Voting Members:

- Ten members, approved by Senate, at least two of whom shall be members of Senate. Normally, there shall be one member from each of the Academic Divisions (Faculties/Schools/Division), reflecting the diversity of disciplines at the University.
- Two Deans approved by Senate
- One staff member approved by Senate
- One undergraduate student nominated by TRUSU and appointed by the Senate Steering committee.
- One graduate student nominated by TRUSU and appointed by Senate Steering Committee
- Associate Vice-President, Research & Graduate Studies
Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:

- Provost & Vice-President, Academic (or designate)
- Vice-President, Administration & Finance (or designate)
- [Accreditation Liaison Officer]

Secretarial Support:

- Office of Research and Graduate Studies
Student **Engagement Success** Committee of Senate

**Terms of Reference**

**Definition of Student Engagement:**

"Student engagement is transformative educational experience that results in cognitive development, personal growth and interpersonal effectiveness."

**Responsibilities of the Student Engagement Committee:**

- to review and report to Senate on studies and research initiatives associated with Student **Engagement Success Success** that can assist the university in achieving the goals outlined in the University **Strategic Priorities** and the **Academic Plan**
- To recommend activities that will foster and promote student success across the University
- To develop working groups to explore specific aspects of student **engagement success** (e.g., recruitment, transition, retention)
- To advise Senate on policies related to student support and services
- To advise Faculties, **Schools** and the Senate on opportunities to foster and enhance linkages between student support activities, academic programs and learning outcomes
- To advise the **Accreditation Steering Committee** and report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme **Student Success**.

**Composition**

- Chair: A Committee member elected by the Committee
- Associate Vice-President, Strategic Enrolment and University Registrar (or designate)
- **Associate Vice-President**, Open Learning (or designate)
- Dean of Students
- **Executive-Director**, Centre for Student EngagementExcellence in and Learning Innovation and Teaching (CELT/CELI)
- Director, **Institutional Planning and Analysis** Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (or designate)
- Executive Director, Aboriginal Education (or designate)
- Associate Vice-President, TRU World (or designate)
- One Dean
- University Librarian (or designate)
- Two **CELI-CELT** representatives, appointed by the **Executive-Director**
- One representative appointed by the Alumni Association
- **Up to four (4)** Faculty and/or Open Learning Faculty Members appointed by Senate
- Up to seven (7) Students nominated by TRUSU and appointed by the Senate Steering Committee
- Secretarial Support: Office of Dean of Students

**Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:**
- Accreditation Liaison Officer
Student Engagement Success Committee of Senate

Terms of Reference

Definition of Student Engagement:
"Student engagement is transformative educational experience that results in cognitive development, personal growth and interpersonal effectiveness."

Responsibilities of the Student Engagement Committee:

- to review and report to Senate on studies and research initiatives associated with Student Engagement Success that can assist the university in achieving the goals outlined in the University Strategic Priorities and the Academic Plan
- To recommend activities that will foster and promote student success across the University
- To develop working groups to explore specific aspects of student engagement success (e.g., recruitment, transition, retention)
- To advise Senate on policies related to student support and services
  - To advise Faculties, Schools and the Senate on opportunities to foster and enhance linkages between student support activities, academic programs and learning outcomes

- To advise the Accreditation Steering Committee Senate and report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme Student Success.

Composition

- Chair: A Committee member elected by the Committee
- Associate Vice-President, Strategic Enrolment and University Registrar (or designate)
- Vice-President, Associate Vice-President, Open Learning (or designate)
- Dean of Students
- Executive Director, Centre for Student Engagement Excellence in and Learning Innovation and Teaching (CELTCSEL)
- Director, Institutional Planning and Analysis, Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (or designate)
- Executive Director, Aboriginal Education (or designate)
- Associate Vice-President, TRU World (or designate)
- One Dean
- University Librarian (or designate)
- Two CELT representatives, appointed by the Executive Director
- One representative appointed by the Alumni Association
- Up to four (4) Faculty and/or Open Learning Faculty Members appointed by Senate
- Up to seven (7) Students nominated by TRUSU and appointed by the Senate Steering Committee
- Secretarial Support: Office of Dean of Students

**Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:**

- **Accreditation Liaison Officer**
Purpose

The Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) is dedicated to providing evidence-based advice with regard to environmental sustainability policies and practices that foster a sustainable future and lead to health and economic benefits for the University community. The ESAC will act to promote dialogue and discussion on issues related to the environment and sustainability. The ESAC is also committed to fostering environmental literacy, sustainable development, and environmental responsibility at Thompson Rivers University that can serve as a model for others.

Responsibilities

1. To advise the Board of Governors and Senate regarding the development, operation, and continuous evaluation of sustainability-related policy at TRU, including the current TRU Strategic Sustainability Plan.
2. To investigate environmental sustainability-related issues of concern at TRU and make recommendations to Administration, the Board of Governors and Senate within their respective areas of responsibility.
3. To communicate and collaborate with the Office of Sustainability on environmental sustainability issues.
4. To advise the Accreditation Steering Committee and report on mission fulfillment in relation to the core theme Sustainability.

Composition

Chair and Vice-Chair

Voting members of the Committee, nominated by the committee and elected at the first meeting of the academic year, to serve a one year term.

Voting Members

- Three members-at-large appointed by the Board of Governors (who need not be Board members)
- Five faculty* members, preferably including a representative from the Wellness committee, and two staff** representatives appointed by Senate (who need not be Senate members)
- Director of Facilities or designate
- Ancillary Services Director or designate
- One Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee representative appointed by the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee
- Two students appointed by TRU Student Union
• General Counsel or designate
• Director of Sustainability
• Deans Council representative
• Director of Aboriginal Affairs or designate

“faculty” includes teaching staff from the Open Learning Division

** “staff” includes all employees of TRU other than faculty.

Non-Voting Members
• Accreditation Liaison Officer

Terms of Office

Appointed members other than students will serve a three year term, which can be renewed by the constituency that appointed them. Students are appointed for a 1 year term which can be renewed by the constituency that appointed them.

Meetings, Agendas, Records and Reporting

• Meeting dates and times will be agreed upon by the Committee.
• The Chair will be responsible for ensuring that meeting agendas are sent out to all members at least one week prior to the meeting date.
• Minutes will be recorded during all meetings and will be sent to all the committee members before the next meeting.
• Meetings will be open to the public.
• Report to the Board of Governors and Senate as needed.

Administrative Support

Office of the Director, TRU Sustainability.

1. Definition of Sustainability

“Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations”.

(http://www.epa.gov/sustainability/basicinfo.htm)
First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs  
Terms of Reference

Responsibilities

- Advise Senate on measures to promote, support and celebrate the success of students of aboriginal ancestry
- Advise Senate on measures to ensure linkage and alignment of academic, budgetary and other priorities of Senate with its efforts in connection with aboriginal affairs at the University
- Advise Senate on measures to assist the University in meeting the goals set out in its Strategic Plan with regard to making TRU the University of Choice for Aboriginal Students and First Nations
- Other duties as assigned by Senate
  - Establish such subcommittees as needed to fulfill the Committee's responsibilities
  - In collaboration with the International Affairs Committee of Senate (SIAC), consult with the Intercultural Understanding Committee, a sub-committee of both FNAAC and SIAC, and advise the Accreditation Steering Committee and report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme Intercultural Understanding.

Committee Composition
Chair
VP Academic or designate (ex-officio, voting)

Voting Members:

- A minimum of two Senators approved by Senate (one must be a Dean)
- Five faculty members approved by Senate, preferably of aboriginal and/or Métis origin
- Two students appointed by TRUSU, preferably of aboriginal and or Métis origin
- One representative from the First Nations Student Association appointed by the First Nations Student Association
- One representative from the Gathering Place appointed by the Dean of Student Development
- One representative of the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society appointed by the SCES
- One representative from the Interior Indian Friendship Society appointed by the IIFS
- Executive Director, Aboriginal Education
- One Elder appointed by the Executive Director, Aboriginal Education
- One Métis representative appointed by the Executive Director, Aboriginal Education

Secretarial Support
Misty Antoine, Divisional Secretary, Aboriginal Education Centre
International Affairs Committee

Responsibilities of the International Affairs Committee
• Advise Senate on measures to achieve the goals set out in the University's Strategic Plan and Academic Plan with regard to International Opportunities with a focus on internationalization and increasing the number of international opportunities for TRU students and faculty.
• Advise Senate on measures to promote alignment of academic, budgetary and other priorities of Senate with the international activities of the University.
• Advise Accreditation Steering Committee and report on mission fulfillment in relation to the Core Theme Intercultural Understanding.
• Establish such subcommittees as needed to fulfill the Committee's responsibilities.

Membership
• Chair: Associate Vice President, International, & Chief Executive Officer TRU World Global Operations

Members
• One Dean, approved by Senate
• Five faculty members and or OL Faculty Members approved by Senate (one must be a Senator)
• Up to three students nominated by TRUSU and appointed by the Senate Steering Committee (preferably including one OL student, one undergraduate student, one international student enrolled in a graduate program)
• One representative from the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee appointed by the APPC
• One representative from the Budget Committee of Senate appointed by BCOS
• One member, to be appointed by the Associate Vice President, International
• One representative from Open Learning appointed by Vice-Provost, Open Learning

Ex Officio - Members
• Vice-Chair: A Director, TRU World
• General Counsel (or designate)
• Director, PLAR (or designate)
• Dean of Students (or designate)
• Intercultural Coordinator

Administrative Support
• TRU World
Intercultural Understanding

Sub-Committee of
First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs Committee (FNAAC)
and International Affairs Committee (SIAC)

Terms of Reference

Responsibilities

To advise the Accreditation Steering Committee and report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme Intercultural Understanding.

Composition

Chair
Intercultural Coordinator (voting)

Voting Members
Comprised equally of members from FNAAC and SIAC. Nominations to be approved by the Chairs of FNAAC and SIAC in consultation with their committee members.

• 6 Faculty members (3 representatives from both FNAAC and SIAC).
• 2 Deans (1 representative from both FNAAC and SIAC).
• 2 Students (1 representative from both FNAAC and SIAC).
• The Chair of FNAAC.
• The Chair of SIAC.

Ex Officio Non-Voting Member
• Accreditation Liaison Officer
Student Success Committee of Senate

Terms of Reference

Responsibilities of the Student Success Committee:

- to review and report to Senate on studies and research initiatives associated with Student Success that can assist the university in achieving the goals outlined in the University Strategic Priorities and the Academic Plan
- To recommend activities that will foster and promote student success across the University
- To develop working groups to explore specific aspects of student success (e.g. transition and retention)
- To advise Senate on policies related to student support and services
- To advise Faculties, Schools and the Senate on opportunities to foster and enhance linkages between student support activities, academic programs and learning outcomes
- To advise the Accreditation Steering Committee and report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme Student Success.

Composition

- Chair: A Committee member elected by the Committee
- Associate Vice-President, Strategic Enrolment and University Registrar (or designate)
- Associate Vice-President, Open Learning (or designate)
- Dean of Students
- Director, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)
- Director, Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (or designate)
- Executive Director, Aboriginal Education (or designate)
- Associate Vice-President, TRU World (or designate)
- One Dean
- University Librarian (or designate)
- Two CELT representatives, appointed by the Director
- One representative appointed by the Alumni Association
- Four (4) Faculty and/or Open Learning Faculty Members appointed by Senate
- Up to seven (7) Students nominated by TRUSU and appointed by the Senate Steering Committee
- Secretarial Support: Office of Dean of Students

Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:

- Accreditation Liaison Officer
Since the last report to Senate, in April 2017, the Research Committee’s activities are as follows:

- Several sub-committees were formed to adjudicate internal faculty and student awards:
  - Faculty Research Grants: Internal Research Fund, Research Training Recognition Fund (two competitions annually), Major Collaborative Research Grants, Apprenticeship Awards, Community-Driven Research Grants, Accelerator Awards, Northcote and Brink Professorship
  - Faculty Awards: Undergraduate Research Mentorship Award, Graduate Mentorship Award, Excellence in Scholarship Award, and Master Scholar Award
  - Student Awards: Undergraduate Research Experience Award Program (two competitions)

- Committee struck a sub-Committee to provide leadership on the development of a one credit Research Credential.

- Presentations made to the Committee included:
  - CRC Chair, Dr. Heather Price
  - CRC Chair, Dr. Yana Nec
  - Dr. Rick Brewster
  - Dr. Catherine Ortner
  - Research Mentors (Cindy James and Aime Schellenberg)

- An updated Research Groups and Centres policy was re-reviewed and recommended for approval. Under the existing policy, reviewed the application for “All My Relations” research centre proposed by Dr. Rod McCormick.

- Updated Committee Terms of Reference to include an advisory role to the Accreditation Steering Committee and to report on mission fulfilment in relation to the core theme of Research.

- Prepared the Triennial Report for Senate.

- Reviewed and endorsed the MOU establishing the Interior Research Universities Coalition between TRU, UBCO and UNBC.
• The committee advised the AVP Research on ongoing issues and continues to be ambassadors for research on campus.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Lawrence
Chair, Senate Research Committee
Over the past 12 months, the Graduate Studies Committee of Senate has met 8 times and accomplished the following:

- Reviewed policies ED 3-4, ED 3-9 and ED 3-5, to ensure the perspective of Graduate Studies was considered in amendments
- Reviewed 17 graduate course/program changes
- Reviewed and recommended 24 applications for graduate supervisor status
- Reviewed changes to the University Calendar for Graduate Studies and Programs
- Adjudicated the Governor General’s Gold Medal for Graduate Studies and the Ken Lepin Awards
- Invited speakers to present on Access and Use of Data to Manage Graduate Programs (IPE), Program Review of Graduate Programs (G. Bunny), and Strategic Enrolment Management (M. Bluhm)
- Reviewed and recommended two new graduate programs to APPC: Master of Data Science and Master of Engineering Science
- Worked with G. Bunny on establishing timelines for graduate programs and graduate student surveys
PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING

REPORT TO SENATE

At the meeting of the Planning Council for Open Learning (PCOL) held on March 12, 2018, the Council approved the minutes of its meeting of December 5, 2017. Those approved minutes constitute PCOL’s report to Senate for December 5, 2017, and can be found at the following web link:

https://www.tru.ca/__shared/assets/20171205Minutes42658.pdf

Respectfully submitted,

Christine L. Bovis-Cnossen
Chair, Planning Council for Open Learning
Electoral results for positions on the Board of Governors, the University Senate, the Planning Council for Open Learning and the TRU Community Corporation are provided below.

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Two (2) Student Representatives | Appointment term September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019

Nominees:
- Devin Griffin  **Elected**  189 votes
- Swagatam Majumder  **Elected**  184 votes
- Yogesh Gandhi  176 votes
- Shreya Patel  93 votes

**UNIVERSITY SENATE**

Four (4) Student Representatives | Appointment term September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019

Nominees:
- Kourtney Cameron  **Elected**  192 votes
- Stephanie Tate  160 votes
- Deepinder Singh  **Elected**  159 votes
- Varun Kalia  **Elected**  153 votes
- Nicholas Warner  150 votes
- Devin Griffin  134 votes
- Vimaljeet Singh  122 votes
- Shreya Patel  92 votes
- Eunice Aniogbe - Candidate withdrawn

**PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING (PCOL)**

One (1) Student Representative | Appointment term September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019

Nominees:
- Kourtney Cameron  **Elected**  221 votes
- Shawn Mountenay  120 votes
- Barry Wolfenden  39 votes

**TRU COMMUNITY CORPORATION**

One (1) Student Representative | Appointment term September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019

Nominee:
- Jagmesh Randhawa  **Elected by acclamation**
March 12, 2018
Senate
Thompson Rivers University
900 McGill Road
Kamloops, BC V2C 0C8

Responses to the Student Budget Consultation Report 2018/19

Senators,

As you know, the Thompson Rivers University Students’ Union (TRUSU) conducts an annual Student Budget Consultation to identify students’ priorities and perceived service gaps for consideration in the development of the university budget.

We are pleased to present for your consideration the improvements to this process, the results from the consultation for the 2018/19 budget, and the responses from the university.

Background and Process

This process was established in 2014 in partnership with TRU to ensure a meaningful and proactive opportunity for student input in university planning and budgeting. Since that time we have worked to continuously improve the processes and outcomes.

This year we continued efforts to ensure that students’ priorities are well understood in the university community, distributing the Student Budget Consultation Report 2018/19 to all individuals in positions of leadership, governance, and management.

We further focused on improving the consistency of responses, and worked with the Vice President Administration and Finance to develop a template designed for fulsome and readily understood responses with direct bearing to our recommendations.

For accountability and student awareness of how their input is considered, the recommendations and responses are published on our Student Budget Consultation webpage (trusu.ca/advocacy/student-budget-consultation). We listed the recommendations by priority area, and marked each more simply this year as “awaiting response”, “response received”, or “no response”. We continued to provide summaries of responses, which make them readily
digestible and relatable to the student experience. Starting this year, these also include links to full responses from TRU to ensure that those students who seek more detail may consider these directly from the source.

Results and Responses

The Student Budget Consultation Report 2018/19 identified five priority areas including parking, food services, Student Awards and Financial Support, academic advising, and course materials. It made thirteen recommendations for improvement across these areas based on students' specific concerns and ideas.

We are pleased to report that we have received responses, of some nature, to all thirteen recommendations. We have been further encouraged that the responses have increased in consistency of format and detail, with a number reflecting the suggested template. We strongly encourage you to take a moment to review those responses (trusu.ca/advocacy/student-budget-consultation). In the meantime, we would like to draw your attention to key points from responses to each priority area.

On parking, it is important that fees have been frozen for the 2018/19 year. This provides some basic relief on the key student concern of affordability. Further, the commitment to compensate for the effect of construction on spaces through temporary lots may help address the shortage experienced this year. The full effect of the substantial changes in the Sustainable Parking Framework, however, are not well measured. Better measurement and responsiveness will be necessary to address this fundamental issue of access to campus.

On food services, the commitment to a full and meaningful consultation to shape any new or renewed campus food service contract(s) is critical and appreciated. This represents an opportunity to rethink food on campus to better reflect community needs, and students are eager to participate.

On Student Awards and Financial Support, the department has struggled to meet increased pressures, as financing their education grows as a fundamental student concern. It is promising that the department has hired an external consultant to review its organization and processes to be more efficient and better serve students. Critically, it has requested – for the third year – additional staff resources, which have not grown in over a decade. Students will be eager to have confirmation of these much needed resources in the budget.
On **academic advising**, the development of an implementation plan for the Degree Works software confirms systematic improvements to the way students and their advisors can map paths to graduation. However, the project has proven labour-intensive, leading to delays thus far. The Registrar has requested – for the second year – additional staff resources to facilitate this work as well as transfer credit articulation. Students will be eager to have confirmation of these much needed resources in the budget.

On **course materials**, it is encouraging to see work on two fronts for improved affordability. The Library has committed to investigate the possibility of establishing a “textbook-on-reserve” system as an option for students who cannot afford to purchase their own copies. At the same time, a partnership between the Library, Open Learning, the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, individual champions, and the Students’ Union has submitted a Strategic Initiative Fund request for a TRU OER Development Grant Program to support instructors who create, adapt, and adopt free open course materials. Students will be eager to have confirmation of funding for this innovative and collaborative project.

**Conclusion**

We hope this provides a better understanding of whether and how each of students’ priorities has been reflected in university planning, and we look forward to continuing to work together to improve our collegial budget development processes.

Best regards,

[Signature]

Tatiana Gilbert
President