

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

PRESENTED BY: Roy Dobson, Chair, Academic Programs Committee of Council

DATE OF MEETING: May 16, 2013

SUBJECT: Items for Information:
- Reforming Open Studies proposal
- Minor curricular corrections

COUNCIL ACTION: **For information only**

SUMMARY:

1. Reforming Open Studies proposal

At its April 4, 2013 meeting, the Open Studies Faculty Council accepted in principle the reforms proposed by designated dean, Gordon DesBrisay, including agreement to disestablish Open Studies. The Academic Programs Committee discussed the academic implications of this proposal at its April 10 meeting, noting in particular that the Open Studies Faculty Council intended to change the way it dealt with admission of students who had been required to discontinue from other colleges.

The committee approved the Open Studies Reforms proposal document as a basis to proceed in the future and agreed to take this document for information to the May meeting of Council.

The Planning and Priorities Committee of Council is presently reviewing a proposal to disestablish the Open Studies Faculty Council, which would be brought to Council for approval and to University Senate for confirmation.

2. Minor curricular corrections

The Academic Programs Committee approved the correction of the name of the field of study for the Bachelor of Science in Animal Bioscience from “domestic animal biology” to “animal bioscience”.

A minor correction in the Academic Schedule was approved regarding the spring break dates for the 4th year Veterinary Medicine students.

In the Admissions Report (January, 2013) the number of students admitted to the Nutrition program should have been shown as 28, not 26.

ATTACHMENTS:

Reforming Open Studies: A proposal submitted by the Open Studies Faculty Council
Letters of support from colleges

Reforming Open Studies: *A Proposal Submitted by the Open Studies Faculty Council*

April 7, 2013

The Case for Change: Introduction

Open Studies as we now know it at the University of Saskatchewan evolved from a long and honourable history (mainly under the title of “Unclassified Studies” in the old Extension Division) and a series of entirely defensible decisions that have, nevertheless, yielded a structure unlike any other at a Canadian university.¹ That in itself might not be problematic, but the plain fact is that Open Studies as currently construed does not and probably cannot best serve the needs of either of the two disparate categories of students admitted under its umbrella; nor can it fulfill its potential within the emerging strategic enrolment management goals of the university. The good news is that the necessary reform of Open Studies can: a) be implemented promptly and in ways that promise to better serve both student constituencies; b) effect administrative efficiencies that will benefit students and save them and the institution money; and c) enhance rather than limit this university’s historic commitment to making a university education accessible to as many Saskatchewan people as possible.

Background

Open Studies at the U of S is, in many ways, an anomaly. It is neither fish nor fowl: it functions somewhat like a college, including being overseen by a designated dean appointed by the provost and an Open Studies Faculty Council drawn from across campus and modeled closely on college faculty councils; but it grants no degrees, has no faculty or classes of its own. The daily operations of Open Studies are administered by a Student Enrolment Services Division (SESD) unit consisting of one full-time Coordinator and a clerical assistant shared with other SESD units, both of whom are supervised by the Manager and Assistant Registrar of the Student Central Support Services division of SESD.

Open Studies came under the SESD administrative umbrella through an accident of institutional history, following the devolution of the old Extension Division. After considerable study of student outcomes over many years, SESD recently came to the conclusion that the current administrative structure is not providing and cannot provide Open Studies students with the support and services they require. The Coordinator’s heroic efforts to assist students, for example, are limited, most notably with regard to academic advising, by the non-degree-granting status of the unit. SESD also concluded, in conjunction with its workforce planning and budget adjustments exercise, that managing an academic unit is not part of its core mission. In consultation with the Open Studies Faculty Council and the colleges directly concerned, SESD has proposed that the dedicated Coordinator position be eliminated along with SESD’s role in managing Open Studies. These proposed changes are fully in line with the reforms we are

¹ Refer to OS staff survey of sister institutions

proposing here. It cannot be stressed enough that economic factors are secondary and that academic priorities and the best interests of students are the prime movers of reform.

Open Studies currently serves about 500 students, down from a peak of 2,017 in 2002-03. The decline in enrolment since then is due to a concerted effort on the part of SESD and the colleges to remove administrative or admissions-related barriers that delayed, deterred, or prevented qualified degree-seekers from enrolling in a degree-granting college rather than lingering in Open Studies. The gradual shifting of hundreds of degree-seeking students from Open Studies to the colleges occurred so smoothly and with so little push-back or controversy as to have passed almost unnoticed. That smooth transition, in turn, would seem to validate the underlying principle that students pursuing a degree are best served by being enrolled as soon as possible in a degree-granting college that can offer them the full array of academic supports and services. The reforms proposed here are founded on an extension of that principle, to the effect that any student enrolled in a college's classes would benefit from having access to the services of that college.²

The Current Situation

Today, two quite distinct cohorts of students remain in Open Studies. Aside from the fact that neither group is currently enrolled in a degree program, they share little in common. The proposed reforms would introduce different solutions for each group, based on different rationales. In both cases, our proposal is founded on years of experience and data.

- *Explorer or “casual” students.* These are relatively low-maintenance part-time learners, often mature and including alumni and other returning degree-holders, who wish to take some classes without (or before) committing to a degree program. In the fall of 2012 this cohort currently represented 333 of 492 Open Studies students, or two-thirds of the total.³

The case for change regarding Explorer students rests less on whether or not we are meeting the needs of current students in the category (though we believe that we are), than on the conviction that the great potential for growing this highly desirable cohort of students is unlikely to be unleashed by Open Studies as we now know it.

The draft report of the Strategic Enrolment Management survey undertaken by SEMWorks stresses that Explorer, returning, and mature learners constitute a large and largely untapped pool of prospective students for this university.⁴ Open Studies as an administrative unit of SESD, however, has no material incentive to attract more students, whereas colleges have (or will have as TABBS-based financial reforms come into effect) both the financial incentive and the support services in place to serve this cohort well. Further, the Open Studies “brand” is, if not exactly muddled, certainly clouded by having Explorer learners who make a positive choice to enrol in Open Studies share the label with students in academic

² Relatively few students in Open Studies take classes in more than one college. Once enrolled in one college, an Open Studies student, like any other, could take classes in other colleges if they met the requirements.

³ In the fall of 2012, 333 of 492 Open Studies students (67.7%) were in this category.

⁴ *University of Saskatchewan Enrolment Goals Analysis Report: Final Draft for Discussion*, SEMWorks, 2012: 5, 9, 40, 46, 57, 71.

peril who are essentially banished to Open Studies as their last option. Disentangling these two cohorts will help to clarify the Open Studies brand and better enable colleges and SEDS recruiters to focus on attracting and accommodating more students in the Explorer learner category.

- *College RTD students.* These are relatively high-maintenance (for many and varied reasons), academically at-risk full-time students who, having already been on academic probation, have subsequently been Required to Discontinue (RTD) from a U of S college and degree program. Rather than accept “rustication” and withdraw from the university for a year, they have taken the option of enrolling in Open Studies, where they can take up to 24 cus in the regular session with a view to improving their grades and returning or transferring to a degree-granting program. This cohort currently represents 159 Open Studies Students, or one-third of the total.

This second category of Open Studies students presents an even more compelling case for change, because a great deal of data collected over many years reveals that the academic needs of these students are not being met as things currently stand.

With regard to this College RTD cohort, it is important to note what admission to Open Studies does and does not entail. Open Studies does not currently offer any academic programming of its own. Over the years, attempts to provide remedial and skill-building courses targeted to this cohort have attracted few students, and failed to help those who did enrol to overcome what turn out to be a very wide range of difficulties, by no means all of them academic in origin. Students in Open Studies are restricted to a total of 24 credits in the fall and winter session, but otherwise they can enrol in almost any courses for which they qualify.⁷ A majority (61%) of College RTD students in Open Studies come from Arts & Science, but regardless of their college of origin the vast majority of RTD students take Arts & Science classes while in Open Studies.

The Open Studies staff work hard on behalf of all these students, helping them develop plans for academic success, monitoring their academic progress, offering general academic advice, and directing them to whatever more specialized campus services they need. Definitive academic advising is (rightly) the prerogative of the colleges, however, and Open Studies students can find themselves caught in a confusing and inefficient shuffle among support services, with the attendant risk of receiving partial or conflicting advice (despite the cooperative ties forged among Open Studies and other support staff). The advising piece is further complicated by the fact that the new DegreeWorks software is college-based, and Open Studies students do not have access to it. And because they are by definition not enrolled in any particular college, Open Studies students have last priority when choosing classes. This makes some sense in so far as Explorer learners are concerned, but it is deleterious for full-time academically at-risk students who are often unable to register in popular classes best suited to their aptitudes, needs, or schedules.

⁷ A few Arts & Science courses have been designated as off-limits to Open Studies students on the not-always-correct assumptions that such students a) are in the RTD cohort and b) are therefore likely to struggle in the class. One consequence of detaching the College RTD cohort from Open Studies would be to render such restrictions, to the extent that they are justified at all, unnecessary and subject to elimination – thereby opening such classes to qualified students in the Explorer cohort.

The College RTD cohort is broadly representative of the student body as a whole: Aboriginal students (15%) are somewhat over-represented, but international students (10%) are not. Students registered with DSS are statistically over-represented in the overall Open Studies cohort; the changes we propose are designed to ensure that their academic needs are not compromised. This would be achieved primarily by ensuring that each college concerned has a clear avenue for student appeals against RTD status and rustication orders. (See Risks and Concerns, below, for further discussion of these groups of students in relation to the proposed reforms.)

Limited Success

Academic success for students in the College RTD cohort in Open Studies is measured by whether or not they manage to earn grades sufficient to transfer or return to a U of S college. At the direction of the Open Studies Faculty Council, the Open Studies staff collected and analysed data on these students extending back over a decade. The story that emerges from the data is not encouraging.

For example, between 2007 and 2011 a total of 694 College RTDs opted to enroll in Open Studies rather than to accept “rustication” and voluntarily withdraw from the university for a year.

- Of those 694 students, only 164 (23.6%) succeeded within a year in raising their cumulative average sufficient to be readmitted to a college.
- About the same proportion (26.7%) did just well enough to be allowed to continue in Open Studies limbo.
- Fully half, 345 of 694 students (49.7%), failed to meet the Open Studies progression standard and were therefore RTD from Open Studies within a year of being RTD from a college.
 - Having opted against a one-year College rustication for what turned out to be an academically unsuccessful year in Open Studies, these students face two years of mandatory rustication, after which they would return to Open Studies, still at least one additional year away from returning to a college.

That basic pattern of 50/50 success and failure also pertained to the previous five year period, but over the past two years the statistics have taken a turn for the worse: in 2011-12, the failure rate was 59%. The downward trend is hard to explain, but even at the former rate of 50% failure the results disappoint in light of the variety of supports provided and the direct interventions and outreach efforts undertaken by the Coordinator of Open Studies over many years.

In and of themselves, these results might be acceptable if Open Studies clearly constituted the best chance these students had for returning to the path of academic success. But that is not necessarily the case. Evidence provided by the College of Arts & Science, for example, suggests that every year about one-third as many RTD students opt for a year of rustication (“1Yr Stop Out”, in registration-speak) as choose to continue their studies without interruption in Open Studies. When those rusticated students return to the college a year later, their academic performance is almost indistinguishable statistically (number of credits, average grade, class average, etc.) from that of students who managed to earn their way back to

the college from Open Studies.⁸ This finding is all the starker when it is remembered that less than one-quarter of College RTD students in Open Studies do succeed in returning to a college within that year.

- RTD students who withdraw from the university for a year, in other words, have the same academic success rate as the *best* RTD students who stayed on and continued in Open Studies.
- *All* of the College RTD students who accepted rustication were eligible to return to their college in a year, whereas three-quarters of those who opted for Open Studies were *not* eligible to return after one year.
- The half or more of College RTDs who are subsequently RTD from Open Studies itself face (subject to appeals on medical grounds) a mandatory two-year period away from the university, and *three* years away from the college to which they hope to return, given that they would most likely return to Open Studies rather than the college.

It is, therefore, not just that a year in Open Studies might do little or nothing to improve the academic success rates even of students who manage to return to a college, but that a College RTD is, statistically speaking, better off accepting a one-year rustication rather than returning to Open Studies, where the chance of subsequent success is no better and the cost of failure (for the student and the institution) is much higher.

What We Propose:

We propose different solutions for the two different cohorts of students who currently populate Open Studies.

With regard to the Explorer cohort, we propose that:

- Open Studies as a descriptor should be associated exclusively with part-time, Explorer learners, with a view to energizing and expanding that cohort.
- Open Studies should continue as an admission category, a “brand”, an ethos, and vital element of this university’s ongoing and historic mission to serve the people of Saskatchewan; but not as a stand-alone administrative unit.
- Administrative responsibility for Explorer students would devolve to the colleges (with possibly some admission/reactivation-related aspects devolved to the SESD Admissions Office.)
- Under the Open Studies label, Explorer students would be admitted to the college offering the class(es) they take. (Like any other student, they could take classes in other colleges upon attaining permissions/overrides from the department concerned.)
- “Under the hood” of the Open Studies label, Explorer students would be admitted to the college concerned under one of two already existing admission categories:
 - The Non-degree category of admission would accommodate most Explorer learners in most colleges. Explorer students in this category would be eligible to take any course for which they have the prerequisites, but would normally have low priority registration status relative to students enrolled in degree programs.

⁸ Data provided by the Director of Student Academic Services, College of Arts & Science.

- The Provisional category of admission would, at the discretion of a college, accommodate students who do not (or, in the case of high school students enrolled in the Early Start program of Arts & Science, do not yet) meet regular entrance standards. Explorer students in this category would usually be limited in the range of courses available to them, and would have low priority registration status relative to students in degree programs.
- Explorer students, whether admitted under the non-degree or provisional category, would have access to the full array of college support services.
- Explorer students as a category would be factored out of college metrics (for example, student retention and graduation rates) in cases where their inclusion would unduly distort data intended to capture outcomes for degree-bound students. (Explorer students were never included in these college metrics under the current Open Studies regime and its predecessors.)

With regard to the College RTD cohort, we propose that:

- College RTD students would no longer be offered the option of continuing full-time study in Open Studies. Instead, colleges would accept full responsibility for identifying students in academic peril and providing them with the assistance they need to succeed academically, or withdraw from the university in an orderly fashion and with a plan for returning.
- Arts & Science, as the college responsible for the majority of College RTD students devolved from Open Studies, would be provided with one additional advising position so as to better address all students at risk. (As proposed in the recent *Transforming Student Advising* application to PCIP.) Discussions with other colleges have revealed that, due to the smaller numbers of students involved, existing support services will suffice to support transferred Open Studies students.
- The Open Studies Faculty Council would be wound down and, along with the post of designated dean, decommissioned once these changes are fully implemented. With Open Studies as an admission category appended to colleges, rather than a stand-alone administrative unit, oversight responsibilities will pass to the colleges concerned.

Benefits & Advantages

We believe that the changes we propose will better serve our students, our institution, and the people of this province. As noted above, re-positioning Open Studies as the exclusive preserve of Explorer learners accords with the goals and principles of strategic enrolment management. It should serve to clarify the Open Studies brand and identity, and it should make it easier for colleges and the university to promote Open Studies as a distinct and attractive option for a large and growing cohort of prospective and returning students. These changes promise to enhance, not limit, access to higher education in Saskatchewan.

Removing the Open Studies option for full-time College RTD students accords with our evidence that rustication is a better option for many of these students. It aligns with the SEM and IP3 priorities of attracting and retaining a diverse student body primed for academic success. It addresses ethical and moral concerns raised many times by members of the Open Studies Faculty Council, and others, as to the

propriety of accepting tuition from, and devoting resources to, students with demonstrably poor prospects for academic success. Experience shows that as such students continue to struggle, failing more courses and taking out more student loans, they dig themselves deeper into an academic and economic quagmire. It also addresses the uneasy sense that, too often, when College RTD students shifted to Open Studies the effect was simply to delay the day of academic reckoning. We are convinced that these students will be better served by colleges that accept the responsibility to intervene more decisively early on to help them avoid being RTD in the first place, or to help them leave the university in an orderly fashion with a plan for returning.

All of the colleges concerned are represented on the Open Studies Faculty Council. Each college -- Agriculture & Bioresources, Arts and Science, Education, Edwards School of Business, Engineering, Kinesiology, and Nursing – has expressed its support for these reforms and confirmed its willingness and capacity to meet the needs of their share of the College RTD and the Explorer cohorts. (See the attached letters of support from deans.)

Risks & Concerns:

We are very concerned to ensure that students not be disadvantaged by the changes we propose. At every stage of consultation, the Open Studies Faculty Council has asked, and been asked, about the impact these reforms would likely have on three particular cohorts of students:

- Aboriginal students,
- International students
- Students with disabilities.

The concerns most often raised centre on what might become of students in these cohorts (and others) who are RTD by a college, but who have pressing and legitimate reasons for remaining at university? What becomes of them if they no longer have the Open Studies option? The questions regarding these three groups of students are largely the same, and so too are the answers.

- RTD students will be able to appeal to their colleges to be allowed to remain. This is already the case, but not all students who are RTD know that they have the right to appeal, or know how to go about exercising that right. That will change.
- Each of the colleges concerned has committed to ensuring that their academic appeals procedures are made known to all students, especially those who have been or are in danger of being RTD.
- College advisors and other staff will be proactive in reaching out to academically at-risk students, and to explaining what their appeal options are, what the likely outcome might be, and what consequences might follow.

Like physicians, we have founded our reforms on the principle of “first, do no harm”. An initial RTD ruling by a college is made strictly according to grades, but in the appeal process the college can and should take a more holistic view of a student’s circumstances and any mitigating factors.

- As noted above, appeals boards may find that rustication is indeed in a particular student's best interest, just as it might make sense for another student to be allowed to remain at the university for reasons that extend beyond the grades themselves.

Here, it is important to remember that RTD rulings apply to matters of academic progression, not to admission or graduation. We believe it is appropriate for colleges to exercise more discretion when applying progression standards to students "in process" than might be appropriate at the admission or graduation points of their academic journeys.

It is also important to note that no other Canadian university extends to RTD students the automatic option we currently offer of remaining in Open Studies or its equivalent. They all, however, maintain some sort of appeal process for RTD students petitioning to remain, and most of the institutions we surveyed made a point of reporting that they prefer to err on the side of lenience in such appeals. (See the appended document, *Looking Backward - Looking Forward: A Longitudinal Assessment of the Open Studies Student Body*, Appendix C.)

- We foresee a more robust appeals process emerging in our colleges, as well, but we are also convinced of the need for students to make their own case for staying, rather than be extended an automatic option to stay, as is now the case.

At present, SESD staff attend to the administrative needs of Open Studies students. Are the colleges sufficiently resourced to take on this work? For the most part, they are -- as the attached letters from deans and associate deans will attest. As noted above, the non-college nature of Open Studies as currently construed limits the extent of support that the staff can provide, and requires the students to shuttle between college academic advisors and the coordinator in Open Studies. By providing one-stop advising service in colleges, considerable efficiencies will be introduced. That, and economies of scale, should enable Arts & Science to manage the great majority of both cohorts of Open Studies with the addition of one additional college advisor. The college has applied to PCIP for support in this regard. In other colleges, the number of students in either cohort should be fairly small and therefore manageable with existing staff and resources.

In Nursing, for example, very few College RTD students ever took the Open Studies option, preferring to accept rustication and save money for courses in their carefully prescribed program. For Nursing, then, little should change. Over-subscribed colleges with long waiting lists are sometimes less inclined to make heroic efforts to salvage students in severe academic difficulty even as they turn away others who might succeed. That said, Edwards School of Business is already, like Arts and Science, working to intervene earlier with academically at-risk student to give them the best chance to avoid the RTD/rustication fate. It is also the case that students RTD from colleges other than Arts & Science, most notably from Engineering, can often still meet A&S admission requirements. They transfer over and settle seamlessly, often thriving in new fields of study.

One of the justifications for the current Open Studies system was out of concern that rusticated students would attend other institutions in their year off, and either choose not to return, or return only to run into complex and convoluted transfer credit entanglements. The transfer credit conundrum is being addressed by SESD and the College of Arts and Science (the college most concerned). As for the fear of losing students, this should be set against a concern over retaining students, often at considerable cost to

themselves in terms of tuition and the institution in terms of support services, who will struggle to succeed academically. Under the principles of strategic enrolment management, it is important to identify not only those students we wish to attract and retain, but also those for whom a parting of the ways might be best for all concerned.

Managing the Change:

The staff of Open Studies, representatives from other sectors of SESD, and representatives of the colleges concerned, most notably Arts & Science, have held numerous meetings to ensure that the changes recommended here are viable and can be implemented efficiently and with minimum disruption for students and all parties concerned. We are far enough along in this planning to believe that we can offer such assurances.

[For a more detailed overview of the administrative processes, changes, and tweaks involved in the reforms proposed here, see the attached document, *Technical Analysis of Administrative Processes Associated With The Proposed Reform of Open Studies*.]

With regard to the Explorer cohort, admission to a desired course will continue to depend in the first instance upon whether the student is deemed to have met existing college standards for admission to its classes; with regard to the College RTD cohort, it is not admission but progression that is at issue.

- **The reforms we propose, therefore, will not entail changes to university admission standards, nor will they impede access to the University of Saskatchewan.**

University Council will however, be asked to approve changes to admission processes so that Explorer students can be admitted directly to a particular college under the Open Studies label via either of two existing admission categories, Non-degree and Provisional.

- The colleges concerned have signalled their willingness to accommodate Explorer students, and SESD has agreed to modify existing admission processes and the Banner software on which they run.

With regard to the College RTD cohort, the anomalous nature of Open Studies means that it can be eliminated as an option for these students with relatively little change or disruption to existing standards. Currently, a student RTD from a college and facing rustication, assuming they do not meet the qualification for transferring to another college (most often Arts & Science) need only inform the Open Studies staff of their intention to continue full-time studies under the Open Studies banner.

- **Eliminating the Open Studies option will have no bearing on the college progression standards on which the original RTD ruling was made.⁹**

⁹ Open Studies currently has its own set of progression standards applicable to the College RTD cohort. These progression standards will be redundant when College RTD students cease to be admitted to Open Studies, and will be eliminated when Open Studies as an administrative unit ceases to exist.

What will change with regard to the College RTD cohort is that the colleges have agreed to take more responsibility and provide more support for these students. These changes reflect a renewed focus on these students as much or more than any change in policy. As noted above under “Risks and Concerns”:

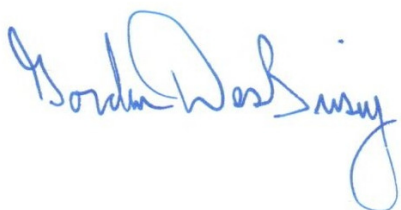
- The colleges agree to put more emphasis on identifying and reaching out to academically at-risk students so as to give them the best chance of avoiding being RTD. Colleges may also choose to develop academic support programs specifically for these students.
- Students who still face being RTD will be offered advising designed to help them plan their year away with a view to making the best use of their right to return to the college the following year.
- The colleges will be proactive about alerting academically at-risk students to the existence of enhanced appeals processes.

In terms of timing, our preference is that these reforms will be reviewed by the Academic Priorities Committee of University Council in April, and brought forward by that committee to Council later this spring. Ideally, the reforms will have been adopted prior to this year’s College RTD determinations.

At its April 4, 2013 meeting, the Open Studies Faculty Council approved two resolutions:

- That the reforms set forth in this document be accepted in principle.
- Should the reforms not be in effect prior to the 2012-13 College RTD determinations, in that case Open Studies would not accept any first-time College RTDs for the 2013-14 academic year unless they have completed a faculty action appeal process in their College.

There will inevitably be a period of transition as the outgoing Open Studies standards and protocols give way to the new. The Open Studies team and the colleges concerned have worked hard and will continue to strive to ensure that the necessary principles, processes, and, not least, communications align and are made as clear as possible so as to minimize confusion and redundancies, and to make the period of transition as brief as possible.



Gordon DesBrisay
Designated Dean, Open Studies
Associate Dean, Arts & Science

Open Studies Overview – November 2012

Background

Historically, Unclassified Students had no academic or administrative home in any College, nor was there an appetite in any College to take on this extremely large, disparate and unregulated student body. In June 1998, University Council officially “delegated authority for academic matters (which ordinarily reside within a college) relating to Unclassified students to the Extension Division,” and in 1999 a formal governance structure and mandate were created for an Unclassified Studies Faculty Council and subsequently UFC implemented a set of progression standards specific to this student body. In 2005, Unclassified Studies and the Unclassified Studies Faculty Council became Open Studies and the Open Studies Faculty Council (OFC) and Provost Atkinson moved the administrative responsibilities and the existing staff (Coordinator, Advisor and Clerical Assistant) to SEDS as the Extension Division was being dissolved and its faculty disbursed. In the ensuing years, with strong support from SEDS leadership, this small team has worked diligently to assist students, manage governance, keep accurate statistics and try to create an environment that engenders opportunity for struggling students to succeed. In many ways, the unit functions as a “satellite” of Arts and Science in supporting and guiding students through their decision-making and a wide variety of personal crises, the administration of deferred exams, visiting student permissions, faculty actions and appeals and all record-keeping related to this student body, but without any authority for student degree program advising, degree granting or any financial advantage in terms of benefiting from tuition revenue. Essentially, these are the students who need the most help. Most are Arts and Science RTDs and RTDs from other Colleges whose ultimate goal is an Arts and Science degree, but under the current model, the only aspect in which the College is directly involved is providing program monitors and degree-specific advising for students they don’t “own” nor from whom they derive the full financial benefit. Over the ten years since the inception of Open Studies progression standards, the success rate for College RTDs continuing in Open Studies, transferring or returning to a College consistently remained at approximately 50% until 2010/11 when it decreased to 44% and in 2011/12 it dwindled to 30%. These results are disappointing in light of the variety of supports and referrals, direct interventions and outreach by the small Open Studies unit. The Open Studies Faculty Council has expressed concern about whether it is ethical to continue to accept tuition but not be sufficiently resourced to offer appropriate support programs to students who have no chance of academic success due to lack of readiness for University or who are undermined by substantial personal life difficulties. Perhaps there could be such efforts and resources within a College environment.

Open Studies Enrollments - October Census Day

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1587	2009	2017	1858	1880	1308	1060	721	506	600	569	573	511

Current Picture

Open Studies Registrations - Fall Term 2012 (201209):

- total number of students registered in Open Studies 492
 - not on academic probation 280 1,821 credit units
 - on academic probation 212 2,036 credit units
 - a cursory review of advising transcripts of all students registered in Open Studies shows class registrations are overwhelmingly Arts and Science
 - a conservative calculation of tuition revenue based on Category 1 tuition, including differential tuition from international students: \$632,000.00
- total number of College RTDs registered in Open Studies: 159
(73% of total students on academic probation)
 - Agriculture and Bioresources 12 2 international
 - Arts and Science 100 16 Aboriginal/12 international
 - Education 2

- Edwards School of Business 18 1 Aboriginal/1 international
 - Engineering 24 1 Aboriginal/6 international
 - Kinesiology 3
- Other students on academic probation: 53
 - Readmissions 25
 - Returning students 3
 - Met Sessional Weighted Average 13
 - Continuing Open Studies students 12
- Of the 111 students who entered Open Studies as RTD from Arts and Science at the end of the 2011/12 session, 37 (33%) were RTD from Arts and Science at the end of their first year. Of this 37, 4 students were self-declared Aboriginal ancestry, and 2 were international students.
- total self-declared students of Aboriginal ancestry 63
 - 27 (43%) of these students are on academic probation
- total international students 33
 - 22 (67%) of these students are on academic probation (21 College RTDs + 1 returning student)
 - registered in 283 credit units of Arts and Science classes (estimated tuition \$125, 000.00 based on Category 1 tuition cost per credit unit \$439.40 x 283; however, there are numerous Category 8 tuition science courses, \$460.20 per credit unit)

College RTD Analysis at the end of the 2011/12 Session

Of the 103 students required to discontinue from Open Studies at the end of the 2011/12 Session, 87 (84%) had been required to discontinue from a U of S College at the end of the previous Session (2010/11).

- Agriculture and Bioresources 7
- Arts and Science 64 (74%)
- Education 1
- Edwards School of Business 10
- Engineering 5

Distribution by Student Type: *(Consistent pattern since reaching Enrolment Plan goal of 600 in 2009/10.)*

OVERALL SUMMARY	201209	Comments/Assumptions
Audit Student	0	
Continuing	112	Good standing or Probation in OS, not seeking college admission
External Transfer	21	From another institution, did not meet a college admission average
Internal Transfer	184	Majority College RTD's; few voluntary transfer from College
New First Time	1	Unique case not admitted directly to U of S College
Provisional Admission	6	Unique cases
Returning Student	111	Reactivated by OS at student's request
Special (Mature) Student	0	Age 21+, no admissions to OS, admitted to colleges
Visiting Student	74	Campus SK students, majority PA & Yorkton (SIASST or A&S sites)
Total	509	

**Looking Backward - Looking Forward:
A Longitudinal Assessment of the Open Studies Student Body**

Sandra Ritchie, Manager & Assistant Registrar (Student Central)

Lucille Otero, Coordinator: Open Studies Advising & Academic Records

April 18, 2012

Purpose of this Report

This report is designed to provide the Open Studies Faculty Council (OFC) with information to support data-driven decision making for potentially reshaping the Open Studies student body. After over a decade of an Open Studies admission category with a set of academic progression standards, and in light of the University's increased commitment to Strategic Enrolment Management, it is timely to revisit the composition and academic success patterns of the Open Studies student body and what this category should and could be in the future. If the original Guiding Principles of OFC still resonate, does their interpretation in today's educational climate require tweaking?

History

In June 1998, University Council officially "delegated authority for academic matters (which ordinarily reside within a college) relating to Unclassified students to the Extension Division," and in 1999 a formal governance structure and mandate were created for an Unclassified Studies Faculty Council. In 2005, Unclassified Studies and the Unclassified Studies Faculty Council became Open Studies and the Open Studies Faculty Council (OFC) and moved to SESD. For the purposes of this document, OFC will be used throughout. Since its inception, the Faculty Council's Guiding Philosophy has stated:

The OFC will develop and administer policies and procedures designed to give students opportunities for learning they might not otherwise have. The OFC will encourage openness, flexibility and accessibility to meet the diverse needs of a mixed group of students that includes:

- Recreational learners
- Students who are undecided about the discipline they wish to study
- Students seeking to meet degree program admission or re-admission requirements
- Students with limited access due to their geographical location.

Immediately upon its formation, the Faculty Council developed academic progression standards and admission/readmission policies which made sense for the various types of students who populated the Unclassified Studies category. One significant aspect of these policies was the decision to allow students who had received their first Required to Discontinue (RTD) from a U of S undergraduate college to enter Open Studies on academic probation in the following Fall/Winter Session, thus having a "second chance" to address issues contributing to their poor academic performance, and the opportunity to improve their grades. These students would then be measured against the Open Studies Progression Requirements at the end of the Fall/Winter Session.

In a phase-in of the new progression standards, the probationary portion was applied at the end of the 2001/02 Regular Session and the first three-year RTD faculty actions were assigned at the end of the 2002/03 Regular Session. Two years later, OFC reviewed performance data on the two annual cohorts dealt with under the new policies and recommended against any change at that time. Data demonstrated that approximately half the students on probation who had been given a second chance were subsequently achieving academic success by meeting Open

Studies Progression Requirements, returning to their former College or transferring to another College. The OFC felt it necessary to have more experience with the relatively new RTD policies before implementing changes.

In March 2005, following discussions with the OFC and in conversations with representatives from the Extension Division, SESD, the Provost's Office and Arts and Sciences (related to the move of Open Studies from Extension to SESD), it was unanimously recommended that no change to current RTD policies affecting Open Studies or students RTD from colleges and receiving a second chance in Open Studies should be made and the issue should be revisited in 3 to 5 years when more longitudinal data on student academic performance was available. In concert with the move to SESD, the Provost directed the AVP of Student Enrolment Services to explore and implement policy changes that would remove existing administrative or admissions-related barriers which deterred or prevented qualified degree-seeking students from entering colleges rather than lingering in Open Studies. Driven by the Provost's Enrolment Plan, SESD and OFC embarked on a planned reduction in the total number of Open Studies students from the 2004/05 headcount of 1880 to an ultimate enrolment goal of around 600 within five years. This goal was successfully achieved through a combination of administrative policy changes that moved students into Colleges and by attrition due to students not meeting Open Studies Progression Requirements.

In the winter of 2009, student success data and the academic progression standards themselves were reviewed by the OFC. Yearly data since 2005 continued to show the same pattern of roughly 50% of our probation students experiencing some form of academic success. Revised progression standards were implemented in 2009/10, removing one level of probation, adding an incremental sessional weighted average requirement with each accumulated credit unit category and reducing the RTD period from three years to two. The "success/failure" pattern since then continues to show an approximate 50/50 split.

Current Context

As evidenced by the following chart, though there may be a perception around campus that Open Studies is just a "second chance penalty box" for College RTDs, the Open Studies population has never been a heterogeneous group. Over the last decade, the student type pattern has looked much the same as the current picture.

Types of Open Studies Students

As of March 16, 2012

OVERALL SUMMARY	201201	Comments/Assumptions
Audit Student	4	
Continuing	103	Good standing or Probation in OS or not seeking college admission
External Transfer	20	From another institution
Internal Transfer	140	Majority College RTD's; few voluntary transfer from College
New First Time	0	
Provisional Admission	11	Unique cases
Returning Student	121	Reactivated by OS at student's request
Special (Mature) Student	0	Age 21+
Visiting Student	124	Presumably all Campus SK students
Total	523	

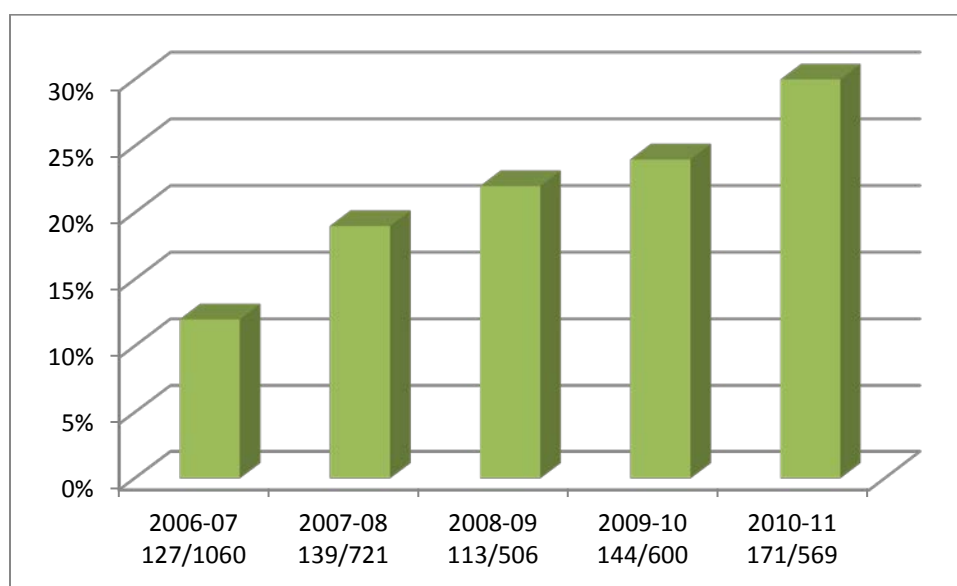
There is one group of students in the Returning and Continuing subsets of Open Studies we would describe as lifelong learners who tend to come and go, taking courses part time for personal or professional interest and experiencing considerable academic success, whether or not they may be pursuing a degree as a final goal. The Open Studies office unofficially termed these folks “casual,” “recreational” or “exploratory” learners. A significant number already have degrees (approximately 20% each session). The Open Studies Faculty Council has enthusiastically supported the premise that such learners should be actively recruited by the University and encouraged to keep coming back. Open Studies staff is eager to assist these learners in their transition to or back into the current University environment. The continued attraction of such learners is especially relevant today as the demographic shift away from a bottomless pool of traditional learners is drying up. We are aware that a new University Admissions Policy supports continuing a category for casual/exploratory learners within the Open Studies umbrella, an initiative OFC has championed. We also anticipate the Strategic Enrolment Management Report (SEM) being prepared by SEMWorks will contain recommendations around re-envisioning the Open Studies category and for the University to actively “court” mature and continuing learners. Gordon DesBrisay, David Hannah, Dan Pennock and Sandra Ritchie were requested to meet with SEMWorks consultants regarding Open Studies. Sandra is also Chair and Lucille a member of the SEM Mature Learners Persona Group tasked with researching and reporting on the characteristics and experiences of this specific cluster of learners at the U of S. We are hopeful there is a commitment on the University’s part to re-examine its strategies in order to recruit students who have a greater chance of academic success. Perhaps there is also renewed commitment on the part of colleges whose students receive RTDs to provide them with greater assistance via early alert and support programs to counter the number of such faculty actions and reduce the stream of failed students seeking the Open Studies option.

Turning to our heavy concentration of College RTDs, over the ten years since the inception of Open Studies progression standards, the success rate for College RTDs continuing in Open Studies, transferring or returning to a College consistently remains at approximately 50% (*Appendix B*). In 2010/11, it decreased to 44%. These results are disappointing in light of the variety of supports, direct interventions and outreach by Open Studies advising staff (*Appendix A*), as well as ongoing referrals to the University Learning Centre, Student Health and Counselling, Aboriginal Students Centre, International Students and Study Abroad Centre and the Language Centre.

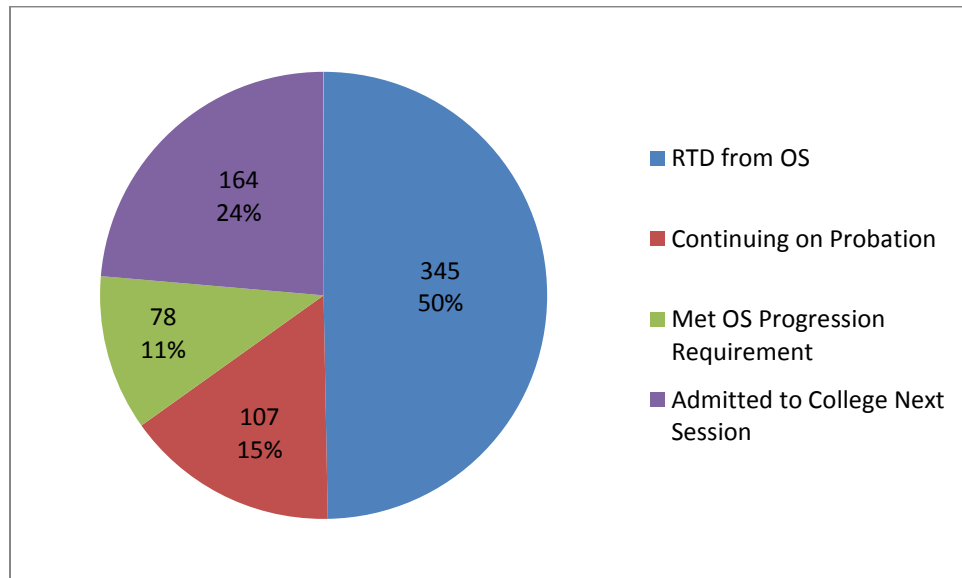
Longitudinal Open Studies October Census Day Enrolment – Data from Institutional Analysis

2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
1587	2009	2017	1858	1880	1308	1060	721	506	600	569	573

Percentage of College RTDs in Open Studies Based on Census Day Headcount



Success Patterns of College RTDs – Five-year Average (2007 to 2011)



Note: Of the RTD group, 53 (15%) Aboriginal, 34 (10%) international students, 17 (5%) registered with Disability Services for Students

Possibilities

With the disappointing history of student success in the College RTD cohort and a potential new initiative to recruit and encourage mature first-time and returning lifelong learners to come to our University, is it time to reimagine the make-up of the Open Studies student body? As some other Canadian Universities have (*Appendix C*), should OFC move away from a College RTD recovery option and return to a “forced year of rustication” for College RTDs who do not meet the transfer average to move into a different College? Should we institute a “minimum transfer average” to enter Open Studies? Should we strongly encourage our “feeder” colleges to institute early alert and student support systems to minimize the number of students they RTD? The majority of our incoming RTDs come from the College of Arts and Science and for this group it would be the end of the line for a year if we discontinued our present policy. Our second-largest RTD group is Engineering but many of them could transfer to Arts and Science because of how Engineering courses are treated in calculating the transfer average. Students who do take the year off are able to be reinstated into their RTD College a year later if they wish.

If we discontinued the Open Studies College RTD option altogether or minimized the number of students we accept by instituting an Open Studies internal transfer average, and possibly seeking PCIP funding for a mandatory support program in collaboration with colleges, could we turn our focus in the direction of attracting and supporting casual/exploratory learners and the other types of mature students who return to or continue in Open Studies and enjoy academic success? In the recent past, the Open Studies Faculty Council has expressed concern about whether it is ethical to continue to accept tuition but not be sufficiently resourced to offer appropriate support programs to students who really have no chance of academic success because of their lack of readiness for University or who are undermined by their substantial personal life difficulties. Is it time for OFC to make a choice?

Recommendations

We recommend that Open Studies Faculty Council consider and possibly add to the options for reshaping Open Studies suggested here, with a view to implementation of changes for the 2013-14 Fall & Winter Session intake. We

also seek support from OFC for future collaboration between SEDS's Recruitment and Admissions units and the Open Studies Advising unit in any forthcoming initiatives to recruit and support mature and continuing learners and actively assist them in a successful transition to and through the post-secondary environment, whether or not their ultimate goal involves achieving a degree.

Respectfully Submitted:

Sandra Ritchie
Manager & Assistant Registrar (Student Central)

Lucille Otero
Coordinator
Open Studies Advising & Academic Records

Appendices

Appendix A Retention Initiatives: Formal Support and Outreach by the Open Studies Office

Appendix B Historical Tracking of Incoming First-Time College RTDs

Appendix C Responses from Other Universities about Rustication Practices

Appendix A

Retention Initiatives: Formal Support and Outreach by the Open Studies Office

➤ A. Fall Term “Checkup”

In early November this e-mail was sent to all students on academic probation, the majority College RTDs:

Subject: Fall Term Checkup & Study Skills Workshops

Now that the rhythm of the term is well underway, you may be experiencing some of these concerns

- * disappointed with your grades on your coursework to date this term*
- * not sure how your current grades will affect your overall average*
- * thinking of dropping a course (Please Note: **November 15** is the deadline to withdraw from 3 credit unit Fall Term courses without academic penalty)*
- * feeling overwhelmed with the demands of your studies*
- * managing your time effectively*
- * personal problems interfering with your academic performance*
- * ineffective study habits*
- * undecided about your degree and career direction*

Please contact me to discuss your situation and we can explore strategies and options to assist you in achieving your academic goals.

Also, attached is information about Study Skills Workshops being offered by the University Learning Centre during November. To register for these workshops, please visit: www.usask.ca/ulc

Response Rate

	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011
# of Students	181	187	179	185
# of Responses	15 (8%)	12 (6%)	8 (4%)	10 (5%)

Note: In past years, Fall term “check-up” e-mails were sent to Open Studies students, but the Open Studies Office no longer has any records of the number of responses prior to 2008, but generally speaking, the response was very low.

➤ B. Winter Term “Warning”

In early January, Lucille Otero e-mailed the following notice to Open Studies students on academic probation whose session average in the fall term did not meet the minimum academic progression requirement and who were at the risk of being required to discontinue at the end of the session. The majority of these were College RTDs.

Subject: URGENT – Review of Fall Term Final Grades – Risk of Being Required to Discontinue

Your final grades from the Fall term have been reviewed and currently you are not meeting the minimum academic progression requirement. As you are presently on Academic Probation, you are running the risk of being Required to Discontinue (RTD) from Open Studies to April 30, 20XX when your record will be reviewed again in May.

*There may be a variety of strategies to help you recover your year. Please note that **Day, January xx** is the last to add or change courses for Winter Term.*

If you wish to meet with me to discuss strategies that would be appropriate for you to recover your academic situation, there will be Open Studies drop-in sessions at times listed below. You do not need to make an appointment.....

Listed below are the websites of support services and resources available to U of S students:

- For information about Open Studies: www.students.usask.ca/openstudies
- Open Studies Academic Progression Requirements: www.students.usask.ca/openstudies, click on Academic Progression Requirements
- University Learning Centre student learning support services and programs: www.usask.ca/ulc
- Student Employment & Career Centre for career planning resources and services: www.usask.ca/secc
- Health and Wellness for health and counselling services: www.students.usask.ca/wellness
- Aboriginal Students' Centre for services for Aboriginal students: www.students.usask.ca/aboriginal

Response Rate

	January 2009	January 2010	January 2011	January 2012
# of Students on Academic Probation	146	178	214	200
# of Students at Risk of RTD	75 (51%)	77 (43%)	119 (55%)	128 (64%)
# of Responses	32 (43%)	32 (42%)	25 (21%)	44 (34%)

➤ C. Reactivation Interviews and Academic Difficulty Self-Analysis: 2008/09 College RTDs Entering Open Studies on Academic Probation 2009/10

Based on the perceived benefits of improved academic performance of students on academic probation and anecdotal evidence of timely and ongoing one-on-one consultations with Lucille Otero during the academic session, she decided to interview every 2008/09 College RTD who requested reactivation into Open Studies. Prior to being reactivated, each student had an in-person or telephone interview with Lucille. Each one had to complete an Academic Difficulty Self-Analysis form, and based on this information and a review of the student's transcript, he/she was given a Student Success Plan sheet with specific recommendations and referrals. Copies of these forms are shown at the end of this section. The chart below provides statistics and an overview of the findings of the academic difficulty self-analyses. This effort did not make any difference with respect to improving success rates.

2008/09 College RTDs – Open Studies Academic Probation 2009/10

<i>College Student RTD From</i>	<i>#'s%</i>	<i>% of 156</i>	<i>Years of University Education at Time of RTD</i>		
Agriculture and Bioresources	20	13%	One year	44	28%
Arts and Science	96	61%	Two years	66	43%
Education	2	1%	Three years	30	19%
Edwards School of Business	13	8%	Four years	12	8%
Engineering	23	15%	Five years	4	2%
Kinesiology	1	1%			
Pharmacy and Nutrition	1	1%			
	156				

Highlights from academic difficulty self-analysis forms

Academic Difficulties/Issues

152 (97%) students indicated a variety of academic difficulties and issues

- exams: almost all students indicated studying and preparing for exams, and exam anxiety
- all 23 (15%) international students and relatively recent immigrants whose first language is not English indicated problems with English
- 52 (34%) students indicated that university is a lot harder than high school
- undecided about career: 28 (18%) students referred to SECC for career counseling
- numerous students indicated difficulties with writing, math, 'student skills' (eg. taking notes)
- numerous students indicated personal management problems

Personal & Social Matters/Issues/Problems

97 (62%) students indicated personal problems

- roommate and housing problems, and living on their own for the first time
- parents divorcing
- variety of family issues, family demands, family expectations
- relationship problems; difficult break-ups
- unplanned pregnancy
- loneliness (especially international students and out-of-province Canadian students moving to Saskatoon)
- adjustment to university culture, Canadian culture, rural to urban, reserve to urban
- personal health issues; substance abuse; sexual assault

Economic Factors

40 (26%) students indicated financial factors

- student loan problems
- band funding
- working too many hours

Miscellaneous

PSY 101: Learning to Learn Strategies for Academic Success

Suggested to 41 students; 9 students registered

University Learning Centre

Except for 19 students whose primary reasons for their academic difficulties were personal problems, all other students were specifically referred to ULC services and programs.

ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY SELF-ANALYSIS FORM

Reasons/factors that contributed to academic difficulty

In your judgment, which of the following factor(s) may have been contributing to your academic difficulty? Please give some thought to how you could address these factor(s) and improve your academic success in the upcoming session.

Academic Difficulties/Issues

- ☐ I don't understand the subject matter or content
- ☐ I don't know how to prepare for and answer questions on quizzes and exams (multiple choice, essay questions, short answer questions)
- ☐ I get anxious when I have to write an exam
- ☐ I'm not sure why I'm taking these classes
- ☐ I'm not really interested in the subject(s) I'm taking
- ☐ I don't know what kind of career I want
- ☐ I don't feel motivated
- ☐ I can't get through all the reading for all my courses
- ☐ I have trouble taking notes in class
- ☐ I don't like asking questions in class

- ☐ I have trouble writing essays
- ☐ English is not my first language
- ☐ I have trouble with math
- ☐ University is a lot harder than high school – I did not study that much in high school to get good grades
- ☐ It seems like I never have enough time to get everything done
- ☐ I keep putting everything off
- ☐ I've never talked to any of my professors to get help or advice about how to improve my grades
- ☐ I miss a lot of classes or I'm often late
- ☐ Other _____

What do you think are your main three difficulties?

Personal & Social Matters/Issues/Problems

- ☐ Living situation/housing/roommate problems
- ☐ Having trouble living on my own (making a budget, buying groceries, cooking, laundry, etc.)
- ☐ Family issues (single parent, divorce proceedings, child custody issues, elder care, other)
- ☐ Child care
- ☐ Other family demands _____
- ☐ Serious illness of family member(s)
- ☐ Death of family member(s)
- ☐ Parent's expectations and/or responsibility to family of origin (cultural factors)
- ☐ Relationship worries/issues (break-ups, strained, abusive relationships)
- ☐ Sexual orientation
- ☐ Feeling lonely and/or isolated
- ☐ Global issues (war/conflict, economic crises, natural disasters, etc.)
- ☐ Perceived discrimination based on race, ethnicity, other _____
- ☐ Immigration issues – renewal of study permit, etc.
- ☐ Adjustment to/coping with unfamiliar cultures or homesickness (university culture, rural to urban, reserve to urban, Canadian culture)
- ☐ Personal health issues/concerns and/or disability that may qualify for academic accommodations and support through Disability Services for Students

Economic Factors

- ☐ Trouble paying for education/living expenses

- Other

THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM IS TO HELP THE STUDENT IDENTIFY FACTORS THAT MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY. ANY INFORMATION DISCLOSED ON THIS FORM AND DISCUSSED WITH THE OPEN STUDIES STAFF MEMBER WILL BE HELD IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE, AND WILL NOT BE SHARED WITH ANYONE ELSE WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE STUDENT.

Academic/Career Goal _____

☐ Courses _____ ☐ Junior Courses Handout

☐ Repeat _____

☐ PSY 101 (R01)/CRN 87420/Fall 2009 TR 10:00-11:20 _____

☐ Program Monitor (student-advice@artsandscience.usask.ca) _____

☐ University Learning Centre Services and Programs www.usask.ca/ulc
____ Workshops: Study Skills, Learning Strategies, Exam Prep & Writing Skills 106 Murray Library
____ Writing Help 966-2886
____ Math and Stats Help ulc@usask.ca
____ Structured Study Sessions
____ Peer Assisted Learning (PAL)
____ Communication Café
____ Online Help

☐ Student & Employment Career Centre www.usask.ca/secc
____ Online *Plan My Career* G50 Lower Marquis Hall
____ Career Advice/Counselling 966-5003
____ Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Personality Type)
____ Strong Interest Inventory

☐ Aboriginal Students' Centre www.students.usask.ca/aboriginal/asc

110 Marquis Hall
966-5790/asc@usask.ca

☐ International Student Office www.students.usask.ca/international/iso

60 Place Riel Student Centre
966-4925/iso@usask.ca

<input type="checkbox"/> Student Counselling Services	www.students.usask.ca/wellness Main Floor, Qu'Appelle Hall 966-4920
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Health	www.students.usask.ca/wellness 145 Saskatchewan Hall 966-5768
<input type="checkbox"/> The Language Centre (Part-time ESL)	www.learnenglish.usask.ca 232 Williams Building 966-4351/international.esl@usask.ca
<input type="checkbox"/> Disability Services for Students	www.students.usask.ca/disability/dss E1 Administration Building 966-7273/dss@usask.ca
<input type="checkbox"/> University Life 101 (ULife or UL101)	www.students.usask.ca/new/ul101 E1 Administration Building 966-2964/ul101@usask.ca
<input type="checkbox"/> High School Upgrading SIAST Kelsey	www.siastr.sk.ca/kelsey/educationtraining/extensionprograms 933-5555
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

➤ D. Psychology 101.3: Learning to Learn Strategies for Academic Success

Course description: *Students will attain a basic knowledge of cognition as it applies to learning. They will learn to apply their knowledge of strategies, skills, and attitude through active monitoring of their own lifestyle, decision-making, and self-regulation in an effort to improve upon their overall academic success and view of learning.*

One section of PSY 101 was offered in the fall term of 2009 and 2010. This course was 'marketed' directly to CRTDs but very few registered.

	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
# of Students Registered	9	6
# of Students Ultimately RTD	6*	0

*3 of the students who had registered in Fall 2009 were ultimately RTD from Open Studies the following year in May 2011, in effect the whole Fall 2009 cohort was RTD from Open Studies

PSY 101 – Fall Term 2009

Nine Open Studies students, all who were required to discontinue from their College at the end of the 2008/09 Session and on Academic Probation, registered in this class. Seven students passed this course with grades of 54, 65, 73, 77, 80, 80 and 84. The two other students failed with grades with of 43 and 0 WF. Six of nine students were RTD from Open Studies in Spring 2010, including four who passed the class.

PSY 101 – Fall Term 2010

Six Open Studies students, all who been required to discontinue from the College of Arts and Science at the end of the 2009/10 Session and on Academic Probation, registered in this class. Grades were 63, 63, 72, 72, 75, and 78.

➤ E. Open Studies Informal “Open Door” Policy

Lucille Otero generally operates with an “open door” policy, that is, if students contact her by telephone or e-mail, or drop in unannounced, she makes efforts to attend to their immediate questions and concerns, and also uses these opportunities to inquire about other matters relevant to their academic performance if appropriate.

Appendix B

Historical Tracking of Incoming First-Time College RTDs

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08*	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
# Registered	180	149	147	120	127	139	113	144	171
Ultimately RTD from Open Studies	75 (42%)	57 (38%)	57 (39%)	56 (47%)	63 (50%)	71 (51%)	46 (41%)	75 (52%)	95 (56%)
Continuing OS: -Met Session Average -RTD Appeal Granted	32 (17%)	31 (21%)	36 (25%)	13 (10%)	26 (20%)	24 (17%)	14 (12%)	17 (12%)	23 (14%)
Continuing OS: Met Progression Requirement	70 (39%)	42 (28%)	14 (9%)	18 (15%)	7 (6%)	16 (12%)	18 (16%)	17 (12%)	18 (10%)
Admitted to a College Next Session	3 (2%)	19 (13%)	40 (27%)	33 (28%)	31 (24%)	28 (20%)	35 (31%)	35 (24%)	35 (20%)

Appendix C

Responses from Other Universities about Rustication Practices

Using the ARUCC List-Serve, we surveyed other Canadian Universities for an overview of their current rustication practices via the following questions:

1. Does your institution have a “mandatory rustication period” (one year enforced stop out) when students who do not meet college/faculty progression requirements are required to discontinue from that college/faculty, and following that year, are they automatically reinstated in their original college/faculty?
2. Immediately following the faculty action, can students who are required to discontinue from one college/faculty transfer to another if they meet the “transfer average”?
3. Do you have any other admission category or mandatory or optional remedial program into which college/faculty RTD students who DO NOT meet another college’s transfer average could go during the college rustication period or must they actually stay out the full year and then are automatically able to return to their original college/faculty?

We received responses from the Universities of Brandon, Capilano, MacEwan, St. Mary’s, Guelph, Acadia, Lethbridge, Moncton, Thompson Rivers, Winnipeg and Alberta. Excerpts from the email responses are included below. Our reading of the responses indicates the majority do have something akin to a one-year university-wide rustication period for students who do not meet the transfer average to move to other programs. Only U of A seems to have a specific “rescue program” for students who do not meet a transfer average in a different college (the Open Studies Fresh Start Program).

Brandon University

We do indeed have the possibility of a one-year academic suspension for students whose grade point averages fall below certain prescribed minimum levels. These are suspensions from all university courses, so the issue of changing to another faculty does not arise. At the end of the one-year period, students are automatically entitled to resume their studies where they left off. I should add that students can appeal these suspensions, and our tendency has been to allow second chances i.e. “suspend” the suspension if the student can provide any sort of reason for the poor performance along with a reasonable expectation of improvement.

Capilano University

We have a ‘required to withdraw’ status for students who have a low GPA. These students are required to withdraw for one year from the university not just their program. These students can appeal to have their case reviewed by me (the Registrar) and I have the authority to allow them to return to their program or to take upgrading courses.

If I allow them to return, the 'required to withdraw' notation remains on their record until they have satisfied the requirements to go back to 'good standing'. I have not had a student, in their appeal, ask me to move to another program but I may approve that if they wanted to take some arts courses instead of be in their defined program.

MacEwan University

#1 - If a student has been RTW (required to withdraw) that student may not apply or have access to that program or its courses until a year from the date of the withdrawal. The applicant must re-apply and meet the admission criteria for the appropriate academic year.

#2 - If a student is required to withdraw they can immediately apply to another program within the university and if they meet the specific admission criteria for that program they will be admitted. As each program at MacEwan has specific admission criteria some programs do not have minimum AGPA for admission and make no specific mention of previously RTW'd applicants.

#3 - Many of our programs have a probation category of admission which would allow applicants with a less than the normally required AGPA to be admitted into the program within this category. Again, each program's probation category may be different and there may be restrictions placed on the number of courses that students admitted in this category can take along with remedial course work that may have to be completed.

St. Mary's University

Our policies on required to withdraw are university-wide. That is, a student is required to withdraw from Saint Mary's, not a particular program or faculty. After staying out one year they can reapply to their faculty for readmission. Reinstatement is essentially automatic if it is the first time dismissed. If the second, then it is the Dean's call.

University of Guelph

1. Students who have been required to withdraw from their program due to poor performance are placed on a 2-semester rustication - they must sit-out for a minimum of 2 semesters. When they are ready to come back they must apply for readmission to the University. They can apply for readmission to any program, not just the one from which they were RTW'd. We also have 1 professional program which requires students to be withdrawn from that program when the student has failed the same course 3 times.

2. Students who have been RTW'd for poor performance will not meet the transfer average of any other degree program but they could apply for admission to an associate diploma program. Students who have been RTW'd due to multiple failures may apply for transfer to another program immediately.

3. Students who have been RTW'd may take up to 1.00 credits at another institution and use their performance in those courses to support their application for readmission. The credits will be

applied to the student's program as transfer credits if the student is readmitted to the University. Some of our degree programs specify the type of courses the student should take to support their application for readmission and 1 professional program requires the students to do a full-time semester of upgrading at the college level.

Readmission to the University of Guelph is not automatic for any program.

University of Lethbridge

The answer to the three questions below is yes. We have an open studies program that students can participate in until they meet the requirements of the faculty that they wish to obtain a degree from. We do have a one year restriction from that faculty.

University of Moncton

Moncton does not have such a policy, but we are just starting to think about it. Currently, students who do not meet the academic requirements of their program are either readmitted with conditions or are excluded from the program and must find another that will take them. This has led to some significant issues, with some programs becoming a haven for under-performing students.

Thompson Rivers University

1. TRU has a pan institutional academic probation policy that cuts across all of our credit programs at TRU (certificate, diploma, bachelor). As a mainly 'open' institution when students don't meet a 1.50 GPA over the course of consecutive semesters they are unable to return to the institution - so it's not college/faculty specific. We only have a few 'competitive entry' Bachelorette programs, i.e., Nursing, Social Work, Education, and they set higher academic entrance and progression standards.
2. No. However, students can and do apply for 'exemptions' to their time out and this often entails them switching to a more academically suitable program.
3. No - students generally sit out 1 semester (a Fall or Winter/Spring semester) and then can return. They generally don't reapply.

University of Winnipeg

1. At U of W, a student who does not maintain a C average while on probation is suspended for one year. They would then automatically be eligible for readmission to Arts, Science, Business, or Kinesiology. In our Education Faculty, a student is removed from the program if they go on probation.
2. Other than for Education, students are admitted initially to “the Faculties of Arts, Business, Science, and Kinesiology,” and are free to move around and change their programs; there isn't a further application process/admission requirement.

3. Students who are suspended may do something of an academic nature, such as our Intro to University course, and appeal to return early from the suspension.

University of Alberta

1. This varies by Faculty. Some Faculties require students discontinue studies for an academic year (2 terms a year) and apply for readmission to that Faculty after the one year period. Some Faculties require the student to complete 18 OR 24 units of transferable course work with an AGPA of 2.7 OR 2.0 before applying for readmission. Admission is competitive and there is no guarantee of reinstatement to their original faculty or another. As well there are different provisions where a students has more than once been required to withdraw
2. No, usually if a student has been given an RTW from one Faculty they would not be eligible to 'transfer' to another Faculty without providing the same criteria as above (stay out a year and/or upgrade GPA).
3. Some Faculties permit a student to attempt to re-establish satisfactory standing by enrolling in our Fresh Start Program in Open Studies.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Gordon Desbrisay,
Designated Dean of Open Studies

FROM: Alison Renny,
Associate Dean, Edwards School of Business

DATE: April 12, 2013

RE: Open Studies Faculty Council Proposal

This memorandum is to confirm that the Edwards School of Business supports the Open Studies Faculty Council proposals set forth in the *Reforming Open Studies* document dated April 7, 2013.

Our college has or soon will have in place the admission and promotion policies and protocols, academic services, and other resources necessary to serve, as outlined in the document, the cohorts of students currently enrolled in Open Studies, including full-time students at risk of being RTD from our college as well as any part-time explorer students admitted to our classes.

Sincerely,

Alison Renny,
Associate Dean
Edwards School of Business



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

College of Education

Dean's Office

28 Campus Drive
Saskatoon SK S7N 0X1 Canada

15 April 2013

Gordon DesBrisay
Designated Dean of Open Studies
230 Arts Building
University of Saskatchewan

Dear Dean DesBrisay:

Re: Open Studies Faculty Council Proposal

By this letter we confirm that the College of Education supports the Open Studies Faculty Council proposals set forth in the *Reforming Open Studies* document dated April 7, 2013.

Our college has or soon will have in place the admission and promotion policies and protocols, academic services, and other resources necessary to serve, as outlined in the document, the cohorts of students currently enrolled in Open Studies, including full-time students at risk of being RTD from our college as well as any part-time explorer students admitted to our classes.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Robert Regnier, written in a cursive style.

Robert Regnier
Acting Dean
College of Education

A blue ink signature of Lynn Lemisko, written in a cursive style.

Lynn Lemisko
Assistant Dean, Undergraduate Programs & Research
College of Education



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

College of Engineering

Dean's Office
College of Engineering

57 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5A9 Canada
Telephone: (306) 966-5273
Facsimile: (306) 966-5205

April 15, 2013

Gordon DesBrisay
Designated Dean of Open Studies
230 Arts Building
University of Saskatchewan

Dear Dean DesBrisay:

Re: Letter of Endorsement - Open Studies Faculty Council Proposal

By this letter we confirm that the College of Engineering supports the Open Studies Faculty Council proposals set forth in the *Reforming Open Studies* document dated April 7, 2013.

Our college has historically directed approximately 20 students per year to Open Studies through RTD faculty actions. Because of the nature of engineering programs, we have often continued to provide academic counseling to these students while they worked for readmission to engineering. Being aware of the direction Open Studies has proposed in their April 7 document, the College has been careful in our messaging to students at risk of an RTD and we are in a position to advise them appropriately if the Open Studies route is not available to them.

The College of Engineering has always accepted non-degree students into our College and are, thus, already in a good position with advising, policies and procedures to support any part-time explorer students.

Sincerely,

Ernie Barber, P.Ag., P.Eng., PhD
Interim Dean
College of Engineering

Dr. Aaron Phoenix, P.Eng., FEC
Assistant Dean, Teaching and Learning
College of Engineering



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

College of Agriculture
and Bioresources

Office of the Dean

51 Campus Drive Saskatoon SK S7N 5A8 Canada
Telephone: (306) 966-4056 Facsimile: (306) 966-8894
Email: agbio.reception@usask.ca Web: www.agbio.usask.ca

April 15, 2013

Gordon DesBrisay
Designated Dean of Open Studies
230 Arts Building
University of Saskatchewan

Dear Dean DesBrisay:

Re: Open Studies Faculty Council Proposal

By this letter we confirm that the College of Agriculture and Bioresources supports the Open Studies Faculty Council proposals set forth in the *Reforming Open Studies* document dated April 7, 2013.

Our college has or soon will have in place the admission and promotion policies and protocols, academic services, and other resources necessary to serve, as outlined in the document, the cohorts of students currently enrolled in Open Studies, including full-time students at risk of being RTD from our college as well as any part-time explorer students admitted to our classes.

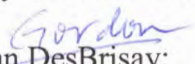
Sincerely,

Mary M. Buhr, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor
College of Agriculture and Bioresources

Murray Drew, Ph.D.
Associate Dean (Academic) and Professor
College of Agriculture and Bioresources

April 15, 2013

Gordon DesBrisay
Designated Dean of Open Studies
230 Arts Building
University of Saskatchewan

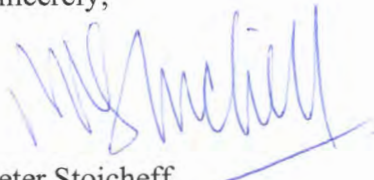
Dear  Dean DesBrisay:

Re: Open Studies Faculty Council Proposal

By this letter we confirm that the College of Arts and Science supports the Open Studies Faculty Council proposals set forth in the *Reforming Open Studies* document dated April 7, 2013.

Our college has or soon will have in place the admission and promotion policies and protocols, academic services, and other resources necessary to serve, as outlined in the document, the cohorts of students currently enrolled in Open Studies, including full-time students at risk of being RTD from our college as well as any part-time explorer students admitted to our classes.

Sincerely,



Peter Stoicheff
Dean and Professor
College of Arts and Science