

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
Teaching, Learning, and Academic Resources Committee
FOR INFORMATION ONLY

PRESENTED BY: Jay Wilson, Chair
Teaching, Learning, and Academic Resource Committee

DATE OF MEETING: February 26, 2015

SUBJECT: Report from TLARC working groups

COUNCIL ACTION: For information only

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

The teaching, learning, and academic resource committee (TLARC) has an established practice of creating working groups to investigate more fully issues that fall under the committee's purview. The work of these groups advances TLARC's mandate of supporting the delivery of academic programs at the University of Saskatchewan.

For the 2014/15 academic year, TLARC has struck four working groups to investigate and report on the following issues:

- Experiential learning,
- Evaluation of teaching,
- Future learning technology, and
- Indigenizing the curriculum.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

The attached report contains an update on the activities of the four working groups of TLARC. Please note the working being done on raising awareness of experiential learning in the student information system at the point of registration.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Report from working groups of the teaching, learning, and academic resource committee



Report from working groups of the teaching, learning and academic resources committee of Council

Experiential learning working group (Chair: Patti McDougall)

The 3rd Integrated Plan, Promise and Potential, sets the goal of increasing experiential learning activity by 20% by 2016 (now extended to 2017). One of the first steps in working towards this goal was to develop a concept paper that mapped out a definition of experiential learning that would be used by the University of Saskatchewan, described the benefits tied to experiential learning, provided best practice examples from other universities, and delineated a baseline of current activity (based on an inventory project conducted in the winter of 2013). As part of the recommendations stemming from the concept paper, there is general consensus that one important way to increase student activity and engagement with experiential learning is to build stronger awareness of where (i.e., in which courses) these opportunities exist. The Experiential Learning working group is working on a project that will “tag” experiential learning courses in the registration system. The group hopes to run a pilot to “tag” a first set of these courses in time for the June, 2015 registration windows. The second project for the working group this year will be to design an experiential learning website to house information for students, faculty and staff.

Student-based evaluation working group (Chair: Patti McDougall)

In 2007, University Council adopted a “common” teaching/course evaluation instrument to be centrally supported. The selection of the evaluation instrument was overseen by the Instructional Development Committee of Council, now known as the Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee of Council (TLARC). Although the common instrument was implemented and maintained in on-line and paper-based versions, no significant work has been done to develop policy or associated procedures beyond information that appears in the overview for the instrument. Over the years, procedural questions have arisen ranging from purely operational items to more strategic institutional considerations. Beginning in the 2013-14 year, TLARC populated a working group with a view to crafting procedural language. It was determined that the appropriate course of action would be to draft a policy document to set out purpose, principles, scope and responsibilities regarding student-based evaluations of teaching and courses. A companion set of procedures would then logically accompany the underlying policy statement as opposed to existing in isolation as a set of disconnected guidelines. The working group carried on into 2014-15. TLARC anticipates seeing these drafted documents by March for the purposes of preliminary approval. The policy and procedures documents will also be shared with other



stakeholder groups before being approved by the Policy Oversight Committee and then brought forward to University Council from TLARC.

Future learning technology working group (Chair: Randy Kutcher)

The Future Learning Technologies (FLT) working group was struck to discuss use of new and current technologies available to faculty to facilitate teaching and has met three times since November 2014. At present, there is limited information on how extensively faculty are using the existing tools, what aspects of each technology are used, and the reasons for not using more of the technologies. There is also limited information on the effectiveness of the technologies in terms of student engagement and learning. The FLT working group has proposed that more information be gathered, not by a random survey of faculty, but by a targeted discussion with only one, or at most two, interested departments. To this end, the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching Effectiveness (GMCTE) and Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) have been invited to provide input on how this information may be gathered. The FLT working group is currently in discussions with both groups.

Indigenizing the curriculum working group (Chair: Candace Wasacase-Lafferty)

The Indigenizing the Curriculum working group has met and outlined a process for consultation for recognizing that the U of S is on Treaty Six land. The Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching Excellence will support this work under the direction of the working group. Draft language is being developed and the consultation process will begin in March. The working group's goal is to survey and meet with campus stakeholders and culturally-appropriate knowledge keepers with the target of having acceptable language in place for Spring Convocation and University council in May. The project is especially important as this spring's Convocation ceremony marks the 100th anniversary of the first graduation of a Métis woman from the university.