

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE  
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

---

**PRESENTED BY:** Bob Tyler, Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** June 20, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Disestablishment of Open Studies

**DECISION REQUESTED:**

*It is recommended:*

*That Council approve that the existing model for Open Studies be discontinued, effective January 1, 2014.*

*That the Open Studies Faculty Council be dissolved as of May 1, 2014, with Council's bylaws amended to reflect the dissolution.*

**PURPOSE:**

The Planning and Priorities Committee submits to Council that Open Studies and the Open Studies Faculty Council be disestablished at the University. As the Open Studies Faculty Council functions as the college for students registered in Open Studies, the motion is presented by the Planning and Priorities Committee in keeping with its responsibility for the establishment and disestablishment of academic entities. Dissolution of the Open Studies Faculty Council has been deemed a consequence of the disestablishment of Open Studies, and hence the change to Council bylaws does not require a notice of motion.

**CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:**

Students in Open Studies are allowed to register for selected, degree-level, undergraduate courses. Students in Open Studies comprise two distinct cohorts, those required to discontinue from colleges for academic reasons, who have been able to register automatically through Open Studies and remain at the University, and those who wish to take university classes on a casual basis.

**CONSULTATION:**

There has been substantial consultation regarding the disestablishment of Open Studies with colleges most likely to be affected by the action, and with the Office of the Registrar

and SESD. Consultation regarding the disestablishment of Open Studies took place with the Planning and Priorities Committee (meetings of April 17 and May 15), the Academic Programs Committee (April 4), and the Governance Committee (April 30 and May 30). The proposal and supporting documentation, including letters of support from the Colleges of Education, Engineering, Agriculture and Bioresources, and Arts and Science, were presented to Council on May 16 by the Academic Programs Committee.

#### **SUMMARY:**

The Planning and Priorities Committee and the Academic Programs Committee believe that students at the University will be better served through the disestablishment of Open Studies and the implementation of a new model to serve students who wish to register as casual learners. These students will be registered in the college of their choice and thereby have access to the academic advising and dedicated support services provided by the college, rather than through an administrative unit in SESD.

As the majority of students required to discontinue (RTD) continue to experience academic difficulty while registered in Open Studies, these students have not been well served by the present model. In the future, RTD students will be able to appeal the RTD decision to their college. Those colleges having the majority of RTD students have committed to proactively identifying those students in academic difficulty to provide earlier intervention and support.

#### **FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED:**

The May 1, 2014 date for the dissolution of the Open Studies Faculty Council was chosen to ensure that the Faculty Council remains constituted and is available to address any unforeseen issues related to the discontinuation of Open Studies. The Designated Dean of Open Studies has confirmed his support for this approach.

An analysis of the necessary transition steps required by SESD has been completed and a communications plan has been developed. Notice of the pending changes has been posted on the University website.

Conditional on approval by Council today, Senate will be asked to confirm the motion to disestablish Open Studies at its fall meeting on October 19. The Board of Governors will be asked on December 13 to authorize the disestablishment of Open Studies as the final step in the dissolution process.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Proposal: *Reforming Open Studies*

## 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.<sup>1</sup> 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

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

### 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.<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup> 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

---

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

<sup>4</sup> *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 SESD 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.

---

<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.

---

<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>**

---

<sup>9</sup> 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”:

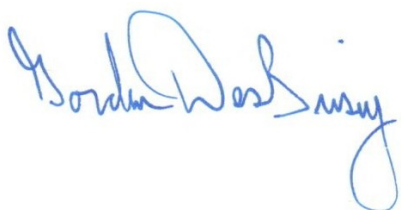
- The colleges agree to put more emphasis on identifying and reaching out to academically at-risk students so as to give them the best chance of avoiding being RTD. Colleges may also choose to develop academic support programs specifically for these students.
- Students who still face being RTD will 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