

## Report on Academic Colleagues 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting and COU Council Meeting

COU Office, Toronto

October 30-31, 2008

- 1) COU Up-date (Economic downturn is the major concern)
  - a) Advocacy: Executive Head's first priority is operating fund considering the rising costs. The economic turmoil is hurting the Pension Plan and Endowments putting additional pressure on university budget.  
  
A University Day (on November 6<sup>th</sup>) is planned at Queen's Park to communicate these concerns as well as celebrating Ontario Research Chairs.
  - b) Capital funding: Ontario government has committed \$60 billion to a ten year infrastructure plan. COU helped convince the government to include university's new construction and deferred maintenance within this plan.
  - c) Student mobility: Provincial government would like to see student mobility and pathways enhanced at the post-secondary level. Academic Colleague will prepare a paper on this by Spring 2009.
  - d) Quality assurance: The QA task force meeting regularly since May 2008. OCAV (Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents) will be overseeing the graduate and undergraduate programs. The QA task force consists of representatives for OCAV (2), OCGS (2), COU AC (2) and 1 quality assurance expert from a COU member institution. They are drafting new guidelines. Existing guidelines are 26 years old. Emphasis of the new guidelines would be quality assessment, quality improvement and quality assurance. i) Graduate and undergraduate programs and cyclical reviews will be done internally. ii) New graduate and undergraduate program will be done externally.  
  
Concerns expressed by AC that developing new programs in a smaller university would be difficult as UQAC will be too strict as this will be their primary job.  
  
Search for Executive Director of Quality Assurance has begun.
  - e) Admission statistics: 3.4% increase from last year. In June 2008, OUCA launched a new website called [www.ouac.on.ca](http://www.ouac.on.ca)
  - f) Climate change: made-in Ontario climate change initiative delegated to Ontario Association of Physical Plant Administrators (OAPPA)
- 2) AC Working Paper Series: Dr. John Logan (University of Carleton) produced a paper entitled "Learning Disabilities: A Guide for Faculty at Ontario Universities:."
- 3) Paul Genest: Post-secondary education is a top priority for the government. New Ministry of Trade formed. Universities should have strong Alumni connections. Universities should highlight that in addition to providing education it serves as a valuable community resource centre. Universities would be better served if we work with the government emphasizing

what we can do in serving the community, educating the next generation including the parliamentarians. We must keep our cool in a difficult time.

- 4) Council meeting: AUCC Board meeting was held just before that last federal election with 60 university presidents and several cabinet members. AUCC is moving more strategically in partnerships with government, private sectors. It has identified 20 institutions that will be receiving 87% of research funding. In CIDA-CANADA partnership 5 countries are in focus Ghana, Senegal, Vietnam, Ethiopia and Kenya. New State Ministry of Science and Technology (Gary Goodyear- minister
- 5) AC working paper: LD Working paper generated good discussion among the council members highlighting the university's legal and moral obligations. The issue of accommodating LD at the graduate level was raised, which might require a different set of guidelines.

Respectfully submitted,

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