

COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

ACADEMIC COLLEAGUES MEETING

Thursday 27th Working Dinner. 6 pm

Friday 28th Meeting. 8.30-12.00 pm

1. Presentation on e-learning.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Keith Hampson. Director Digital Education Strategies . Ryerson University.

The movement toward the provision of more on line learning in Ontario universities is a current trend in toward minimizing costs and improving learning efficiency in the wake of reduced budgets and staffing restrictions.

The presentation reviewed current research measuring the effectiveness of on line learning. Clear evidence of improved or superior learning outcomes are limited given the lack of research data available in the field. Available studies indicated deficiencies to demonstrate a higher level of learning effectiveness when compared to traditional classroom learning practices.

The primary outcome from the review was that the organizational factors required through the provision of effective line learning tools and the transfer of appropriate and effective information was a limiting factor. The initial set up and design costs for converting to equivalent learning packages is extremely high given the lack of e-learning services provided in most Ontario Universities. The support services, incentive, time and expertise required for instructors to move toward e-learning is lacking in Ontario universities. However the provincial government is planning an on line institute with a focus on higher education.

There are many challenges for learning effectiveness. Evaluation, lack of personal contact and retention are major issues of concern as we move toward on line learning in Ontario institutions.

2. Teaching and Learning Task Force.

A task force was created by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents with strategies to consider changes in learning production models and the requirements for possible investments for change.

The immediate focus will be on controversial issues including; faculty work load, the use of part time sessional instructors and class sizes, three year baccalaureate degrees, mandatory on line learning, and across institution first year requirements.

3. On Line Institute and Internationalization of Universities.

A group of Ontario Universities representatives are working with government toward combining courses from different institutions to create a collaborative program utilizing library searches and journal access as some of the learning tools.

An international strategy is being developed using working groups to promote recruitment and the internationalization of universities to ensure the competitive advantage for Ontario. The objective is to attract entrepreneurial thinkers with global experience and international networks between institutions and people.

4. Ontario Education Budget

Higher education remains a priority for the Ontario government. Ontario universities fared well in the 2010 budget despite current fiscally challenging times. The centerpiece was the funding for 11,000 students in 2010-11 to achieve the goal of 70% of the population achieving higher education. In the wake of budgetary constraints the post secondary sector is faced with many issues including compensation compliance, pensions and the creation of on line institutes.

5. Compensation Restraint Measures

Over the next two years universities will experience limitations imposed by controls over public sector employees with the impact unknown at this point in time. The rejection of expected exemption from solvency funding for pension plans will require continued communication with the government with upcoming large special pension payments due.

6. Quality Assurance replaces OCGS.

The Council of Quality Assurance has created a Quality Assurance Package called the I.Q.A.P. (Institutional Quality Assurance Package) for graduate (7 year) and undergraduate programs (8 year). The package has been approved for 2010 and is designed for the review of university programs and will replace the current review process.

Linked to quality assurance the related affects of on line learning on university programs will be dealt with through an on line paper "On Line Education" planned to discuss the challenges and future of on line educational issues. Topics will include: Monitoring Processes, Quality Control, Degree Value, Provision for cross populations, transfer credits, faculty involvement and qualifications, assessment, intellectual property, library access.

Submitted By:

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