

Academic Colleagues Report  
Council of Ontario Universities  
290<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Council  
Toronto, ON  
October 22, 2010

Council met on Friday, October 22 in COU headquarters on Dundas Street in Toronto. The meeting was chaired by Sheldon Levy, President of Ryerson University and Chair of COU. Online learning was the first topic of discussion, with presentation of an Academic Colleagues' Discussion Paper *Online Learning* by Linda Garcia and other Academic Colleagues. In the discussion that ensued, speakers put forward the concept that the location of a learner is not important. The current focus on online learning within COU and the Ontario government arises from an announcement in the 2010 Throne Speech and Budget that an Online Institute would be established in the province. COU's Online Learning Task Force recommends that the province begin with a consortium of interested universities, modeled after the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC). There has not yet been a response to this proposal from MTCU.

COU has developed a Teaching and Learning Task Force under the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) and are relying on this task force to address government's growing concern that current models of teaching and learning are too expensive in times of rising cost and declining revenue. Academic Colleagues have requested that the Task Force add representation from teachers and learners (faculty and students) to the Task Force membership.

Council voted to welcome OCAD University as a member of COU after many years as an Associate Member. This change in membership required an amendment to the definition of university in the COU constitution.

Other business at the Council meeting included an update from the Internationalization Working Group (established in response to an Ontario government commitment), an update on Quality Assurance, a presentation and discussion on postsecondary mental health issues, and reports from the President of COU (Bonnie Patterson), the President of AUCC (Paul Davidson), and Academic Colleagues. There was also some discussion about the anticipated HEQCO paper on differentiation, which has since been released. Although some Academic Colleagues expressed concern about the significance of the paper, Executive Heads have chosen to take a positive and open stance while working with provincial government to identify a more strategic long-term direction for Ontario Universities.

On the evening of October 21 the David C. Smith Award was presented to Don Drummond at a reception and dinner held in the Arcadian Court on Bay Street. Don Drummond was recognized for his leadership and advocacy in shaping provincial and national strategies in support of Canada's postsecondary sector.

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for April 8, 2011 at the University of Ottawa.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Louise Hill, Alternate COU Academic Colleague for Lakehead University