

**University of Windsor
Senate**

5.3: Report of the Academic Colleague

The Academic Colleagues met in Toronto May 21 and 22, 2014.

Working Dinner Discussion, May 21, 2014:

A number of articles and publications related to Academic Integrity were considered prior to a discussion at the dinner meeting.

- Christie, B. (2003). Designing Online Courses to Discourage Dishonesty. *Educause Quarterly*, 4, 54-58.
- Faculty Focus. (2010). Special Report: Promoting Academic Integrity in Online Education. Magna Publications. Retrieved from <http://www.facultyfocus.com/free-reports/promoting-academic-integrity-in-online-education/>
- Watson, G., & Sottile, J. (2010). Cheating in the Digital Age: Do Students Cheat More in Online Courses? *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 8(1). Retrieved from <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/spring131/watson131.html>

Discussion questions were also circulated:

- How can we balance online education's basic appeal – flexibility and convenience – with the practical constraints of preventing academic dishonesty? Which strategies for online assessment seem most viable?
- In relation to the three-pronged approach to dealing with academic dishonesty: 1) policing acts of academic dishonesty; 2) reducing opportunities to cheat through technology and course design; and 3) creating an ethical learning environment. What actions can be taken on an institutional level to address online academic dishonesty in each of these areas?
- It is commonly assumed that cheating is more prevalent online than in face-to-face courses. What are the implications of this assumption in the context of significant investments in online learning in Ontario postsecondary education? What can be done to improve the credibility of online learning?

There was certainly a lively discussion around the topic of Academic Integrity. Although primarily targeted at on-line delivery, aspects of face-to-face delivery were also front and centre.

This is a very timely discussion in light of the government's push for on line learning, and in light of changes that are going on in Academic Integrity offices across Ontario.

A number of important points came to the fore:

- We catch far fewer students who cheat than are actually cheating (something less than 10%)
- Punitive measures are not effective deterrents for offenders.
- Technology, in the near future, will solve some of the issues around identifying the user at the other end of the electronic connection (keystroke analysis or web cam visual identification are two examples).
- Faculty play a critical role in education and elucidation of expectations. The smart design of examinations and controls around examination security are also important.
- There is a link between teaching students to read critically, their ability to write, and the extent of plagiarism. Again, coming back to positive actions by faculty in support.

COU Update provided to Academic Colleagues, May 22, 2014:

COU has been heavily involved in election planning and monitoring. Responses are provided behind the scenes to party positions, and moderation of impact of party policies if possible. Efforts are being made to counteract negative press aimed at institutions (employment stats for example). Some indications of party policies were given.

SMA Process

18 of 20 are signed by the outgoing government. Two outstanding ones, Laurentian and Lakehead are tied to the expansion in the Barrie area associated with a college.

Efforts will continue to examine the SMA process, including the link between metrics and funding and the accuracy of data that is being collected.

Major Capacity Expansion

Framework was released in December with Request for Proposals released in March. Letters of intent are due at the end of June, with full proposals by September. Budget is unclear at this time.

Pensions

The government is interested in moving toward jointly sponsored pension plans. These are advantageous because they are normally exempt from solvency tests as they risk is more broadly spread out. This discussion will merit watching for the future.

On Line

A joint steering committee composed of COU and Colleges Ontario members has met twice. The steering committee will set up guidelines to create the committee that will run the On Line Consortium. A consultation document has been circulated to OCUFA, CFS, Registrars OURA and Faculty Union in the College sector.

Program Approvals

The moratorium for program approvals was lifted.....and then the election was called. No approvals are forthcoming.

Other Discussions

Three-year degrees

A lengthy discussion ensued about the value of three-year degrees at colleges. The points made were mostly obvious to anyone knowledgeable about University degrees and the level of training required, including the level of training of the course professors. There are a variety of misconceptions on both sides of this issue and it is necessary for Universities and Colleges to work together. We both may need to change in various ways in the future, and discussion is needed. COU does have a Relationships with Other Institutions committee that should take action here.

Respectfully Submitted

P.J. Dutton, Academic Colleague