Great Northern Way Campus Academic Governance and Management of Degree Programs

Introduction

The enclosed document describes the proposed model for the "Academic Governance and Administration of Degree Programs" at the Great Northern Way Campus (GNWC). The GNWC is a collaboration of UBC with the British Columbia Institute of Technology, the Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design and Simon Fraser University. This level of inter-institutional collaboration and cooperation is unique in Canada, and perhaps globally, and represents a bold new approach to utilizing the combined strengths of the partner institutions.

The proposed governance model set out in the "Academic Governance and Administration of Degree Programs" proposal has been developed jointly by the four institutions and reflects our combined best judgment of a workable approach that ensures the highest academic standards and accountability of our joint programs. Because it is a jointly developed, and because the four institutions each have unique sets of administrative and governance systems, it cannot fully mirror each institution's requirements; however, every effort has been made to ensure that the spirit of the requirements of all the institutions, and particularly of UBC's requirements, for proper governance and quality control are fulfilled.

It is worth noting that, in addition to scrutiny by UBC Senate, the jointly credentialed academic programs at the GNWC will also require the approvals of the Senate and Education Councils of the other three partner institutions and of the BC Degree Quality Assessment Board (this later requirement resulting from the fact that not all of the partners currently have exempt status with regard to graduate programs). It is also worth noting that the proposal is only intended to apply to new GNWC Degree Programs jointly offered by the partner institutions.

This model of governance is consistent with that anticipated in the GNWC "*Academic Vision*" document considered and approved by the Senates and Education Councils of all four partner institutions in 2003. (Please see the attached a copy.) The key elements of the *Vision* are captured in the paragraphs:

"The GNWC partners propose to break new ground using the best of their proven tools and talents. In the immediate term, each of the individual elements of the academic program may look familiar to one or several of the existing institutions. The academic innovations - the new tools, techniques and synergies will arise from these combined strengths being available in one location."

"GNWC will capture international attention as a model for academic cooperation, for economic integration and for an evolving program that recognizes and enhances the interconnectedness of science and technology with art, culture and design."

The GNWC has now captured both elements of the *Vision*. In the immediate term, several jointly taught courses have been successfully mounted over the last two years - hosted by one or the other partner institution, but made readily available to qualified students from all four. This approach is expected to continue. The proposed governance structure moves academic innovation, cooperation and collaboration to the next level via jointly credentialed degree programs. This is consistent with the expectation that "*The GNWC will be flexible in serving the learning community. It will offer everything from modular courses to complete degree programs."*

The present proposal is also consistent with the GNWC Strategic Academic plan, which states that "*Attention to joint policies giving GNWC some appropriately delimited institutional autonomy will begin to develop,*" and that "*First degree graduates with a joint GNWC credential (bi, tri, or quadrilateral*

certification)" will matriculate. Although these events are predicted in the Strategic Academic Plan for the "Formative" phase beginning in 2008, the present proposals indicate that the GNW Campus strategic academic plan is on track and, in fact, ahead of schedule.

The proposed arrangement will yield significant benefits to the future GNWC students and its academic community, strengthening academic collaboration among the GNWC partners. It will beneft each of the institutions, including UBC in several ways. Since continuing regular faculty members will be appointed at the partner institutions, UBC will gain additional positions. Although teaching assignments of these faculty members will focus on GNWC responsibilities, these faculty members will be expected to participate in their UBC "host" departments and supervision of graduate students. Their research grants and contracts will be "credited" to host units. Further, the intellectual stimulation arising from interactions among faculty members from all four institutions on subjects of mutual interest will be a major asset to many UBC colleagues. Access to students and post-docs from a wide variety of backgrounds and fields of expertise will be another. Entrée to specialized equipment and to enhanced opportunities for connections with industry partners generated through the GNWC activities will also enrich research and teaching and learning environments of partner institutions.

These significant benefits will come at no additional cost to UBC. Jointly credentialed academic programs at the GNWC will be self-supporting, as described in the *Academic Vision* document. An immediate case in point is the exciting new degree program proposal that would be governed under the proposed guidelines which will be presented to the UBC Senate Academic Policy Committee (and then Senate Curriculum committee) very soon for review: the "Master of Digital Media" program. This professional graduate program has received a grant of $39M from the Province of BC for start-up, for establishing an endowment to help fund operating costs, and construction of facilities at the GNWC primarily to house the program. Additional funds for the endowment have been pledged by the industry partners as well as in-kind support. Although future programs may not be as richly endowed, the self-supporting model will be followed.