

**Royal Roads University  
ACADEMIC COUNCIL  
August 18, 1999**

**MINUTES**

<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>COUNCIL MEMBERS</b>	<b>EX OFFICIO MEMBERS</b>
	Doug Bright	Ramona Lumpkin, Chair
	Gerry Nixon	Dana McFarland (for David Krauel)
	Steve Grundy	Ann Nightingale
	Russel Hotsenpiller	Tom Austin
	Jim McTaggart-Cowan	
	Penny Mills	Bette Kosmolak, Recording
	Ken Crewe	
<b>ABSENT</b>	Stephen Long	Gerry Kelly
	Jim Bayer	
	Cathy McKenzie	
	Eric West	
	Nicole Grimm	

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

Three items were added to the agenda under Matters Arising:

- a) B.Sc. student submission - Russ Hotsenpiller
- b) MALT alumni issue - Penny Mills
- c) traffic noise issues - Jim McTaggart-Cowan

**Motion: It was moved by Jim McTaggart-Cowan, seconded by Penny Mills**

**THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS AMENDED.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

Gerry Nixon arrived.

### **3. Approval of July 21, 1999 Minutes**

**Motion: It was moved by Jim McTaggart-Cowan, seconded by Penny Mills**

**THAT THE MINUTES OF JULY 21, 1999 BE APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **4. Business arising from Previous Minutes**

#### **a) Notice of Motion**

**Moved by Gerry Nixon, seconded by Ken Crewe**

**THAT THE PRESIDENT CONSIDER APPOINTING AN ASSOCIATE FACULTY MEMBER TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **b) Council membership**

Ramona Lumpkin provided some background information regarding membership since inception of the Council. She noted that it was still ambiguous whether or not members elected after January 1977 were elected for three-year terms or only until the end of term of the person they replaced. She opened the floor to discussion and feedback.

Tom Austin arrived.

Discussion included whether or not to ensure at least one Program Director be included among the membership at any given term. This led to a discussion of the difference between Program Directors and faculty, and whether or not Program Directors were, in fact, faculty.

It was noted that the Board of Governors (BoG) voting eligibility was the voting list to be used for Academic Council elections. Discussion focused on the 'professor' and 'non-professor' designations established by the BoG. Ann Nightingale described the tendency of universities to move away from the restricted notions of membership eligibility for Senates. She stated that as involvement in learning expands, the scope of meaning of 'professor' appears to expand. After considerable discussion as to how membership of the council should be determined, and methods for ensuring staggered terms, the Chair noted that these issues should be further discussed and resolved during the fall meetings, and before terms expire in January 2000.

#### **c) Grading System**

Ann Nightingale provided background on how grading was being implemented at various universities, and the pros and cons of letter grading versus narratives, or the awarding of 'satisfactory' and 'non-satisfactory' grades. She noted that most concern about letter grades seemed to be coming from learners who tended to argue that letter grades were required by them for loans, awards, and entrance to other graduate schools. Nightingale also noted NSERC calls for grade information from all post-secondary institutions annually.

Jim McTaggart-Cowan thought the range from an A to a B mark was too broad in RRU's case. As grading was discussed, it was noted that letter grade ranges are not necessarily uniform, neither within one institution nor among them. The Chair affirmed that grading was a program level decision and recommended Program Directors work closely together to ensure that standards are comparable, though they need not be uniform.

## **5. New Business**

### **a) Experience as a virtual member of Council**

Penny Mills described her experience as a virtual Council member and the attendant difficulties she felt in 'reading the room' when body language was unavailable to her. She said she felt members accommodated her well but wanted to know if her level of participation had warranted being involved. She also recommended orientation books be prepared for members who teleconference as well as that such members attend their first Academic Council meeting in person, if possible.

There was a suggestion to consider including alumni representatives on Council.

The Chair noted that student representatives remain on Council until their replacements are elected, so that four current student members will attend the September meeting if they are able to.

### **b) Update on AUCC**

The Chair provided an update on RRU's application for AUCC membership, outlining the support of people like Dr. Strangway and Dr. Bernie Shapiro, Chair of the review committee, who will advocate for RRU at AUCC's October meeting. Lumpkin said there was still ambiguity around: a) what a response to AUCC actually means at this time, b) what the ramifications of withdrawing RRU's application might be, and c) at what point in the process RRU might be required to undergo a three-year wait before reapplying. AUCC has not clarified these issues.

Lumpkin mentioned the seeming role of AUCC to be taken as an 'accrediting' body rather than a membership agency, and the problems experienced by RRU graduates when applying to other educational institutions.

The Chair noted that it was not certain whether or not AUCC had ever previously turned down an application when the review report recommended so strongly in favour of membership. Currently, Dr. Brian Gaines, Critical Facilitator for RRU, is advising the Chair on research matters as well as encouraging RRU to create a 'new model' which amalgamates teaching and research. RRU is preparing a response to AUCC for October.

## **6. Matters Arising**

### **a) B.Sc. Student Submission**

Russ Hotsenpiller presented a submission to Academic Council from the B.Sc. students who had debated the issue of how many credits were deemed to be required at RRU in order to receive an RRU degree. He noted that RRU values seemed to be transferred to students during Bridging Week and that the skills gained in oral speaking and public demonstrations seemed especially important. He mentioned his class wanted to stay in touch with this issue and was concerned about the potential of devaluation of their degree if RRU makes changes in accessibility or format. In response to Gerry Nixon who asked if there was anything in the submission that Russ felt could not be gained in a totally virtual environment, Russ stated that the instructor - learner relationships seemed to impart the values.

It was agreed the student submission would be read into the minutes. Hotsenpiller was requested to provide an electronic copy of the submission.

### **b) MALT alumni issue**

Tabled until the next meeting.

### **c) Traffic Noise**

Jim McTaggart-Cowan raised the issue of noise as an educational problem, noting that 83% of classroom space at RRU fronted on the road. Gerry Nixon confirmed the level of noise and fumes was often intolerable. The matter was referred to VP Operations.

## **7. Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 5 p.m.