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It's a bit later than we'd hoped, but this is the first edition of the newsletter for this academic year. I hope we can get one out each month until next May at least.

September was very hectic for all of us. Aside from the start of many classes and the orientation of our new students, we had a couple of major projects to complete. One of these was the development of an Aboriginal Service Plan with Capilano, Native Education College and 7 Aboriginal partners. It was a huge undertaking, but we got it to AVED on the 28th with few hours to spare.

We also have finished the first phase of an ITA funded project to develop a Flexible Learning Strategy in Trades in BC. More to come on these and other proposals in future editions.

The first edition of the Education @ VCC newsletter last May was well received, and in combination with the Education Forums and a number of other ways to share (check out the research group on page 4, for instance), I hope we can engage more, and more effectively, on all matters that relate to teaching and learning, broadly defined.

The Education Council report on page 6 is the last we'll get with Ted Hougham in the chair, and after 5 years, we must thank him for his time and his dedication to the cause. If you see him in the hallways, on the bus, or on the ferry to Pender, you might want to add your thanks.

As before, I welcome any comments and suggestions on the format, scope and style of this newsletter.

Alan Davis
VP, Education
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Education Forum

October 30, 2007
3:30pm - 5:00pm
Room 420
Downtown Campus

November 02, 2007
3:30pm - 5:00pm
Room 5025
Broadway Campus

Items for Education @ VCC can be submitted anytime, by anyone. Our next edition will be in November, and the deadline for that issue will be October 19th.

Dean, Centre for Instructional Development

Alan Davis
VP, Education
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I am very pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Karen Belfer to the position of Dean of the Centre for Instructional Development.

Karen is currently an Instructional Development Consultant in the Learning and Technology Services division at BCIT. Before that she had similar roles at UBC, SFU and the former TechBC.



Before coming to Canada in 1997 she was Coordinator of Academic Computing at Anahuac University in Mexico. Karen has a BSc degree in Informatics, and an MA and a PhD in Education. Her recent doctoral thesis was titled "A model to evaluate programs that introduce technology in the teaching and learning process".

Karen will be joining VCC on November 6th. More details of her start date and office location will be forthcoming.

Faculty Survey on Educational Technology Watch for it...

Lyn Lennig
Instructional Associate
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With the roll out of the new VCC Portal by year's end, VCC will have dramatically changed the teaching and learning possibilities with educational technology (ET) at both campuses, almost overnight. So what impact will that have on your teaching and learning at VCC?

To find out, the Distributed Learning Committee has developed an online survey that asks you to reflect on your professional learning needs, areas of exper-

tise, and classroom design needs using Distributed Learning in your classroom or program.

A key element of the VCC Distributed Learning Plan is to provide supports that will help you develop your ET skills and knowledge. Your responses to the survey will have a direct impact on the design, delivery and content of future ET learning opportunities for you at VCC.

Your input is essential, your experience and expertise are needed.

Look for the Faculty Educational Technology Survey delivered to your Groupwise email account soon!

Program Review at VCC

Alan Davis
VP, Education
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The last of the 3 pilot program reviews has been completed and the 3 reports are being shared with Education Council, Counselling and Substance Abuse, Drafting Technician, and Employment and Educational Access for Women.

This all represents a lot of work by many people, led by the Instruc-

tional Associates, and they have informed us in 2 ways: the first is with respect to the planning for each program and no doubt we'll see budget request in 2008/2009 that reflect the actions recommended by the reviews.

The other is in the Program Review Policy, which has been revised and updated to clarify roles and to streamline processes. The revised policy will be going to Education Council this fall.

Another aspect of the Policy is the requirement for each program, through its Department Head, to file an annual report which summarises key trends and issues. In July this last summer, over 60 of these reports were filed, covering almost every program and department, and again, this reflects a lot of work by a lot of people, and will provide useful material for our annual and strategic planning.

Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities

Desiree Blankenberg
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A learning disability is a lifelong disorder that affects the manner in which individuals with normal or above average intelligence select, retain and express information. Incoming or outgoing information become scrambled as it travels between the senses and the brain. Less frequent, but no less troublesome, are problems in organizational skill, time management and social skills.

It is pervasive in that it can affect self-esteem, education, vocation, socialization, and daily living activities throughout life,

There are **four** stages of information processing that may be affected to greater or lesser degree by an LD

1) Input - the process of receiving/recording information that comes from the senses in the brain

2) Integration - the process of interpreting this information including

- sequencing - difficulty organizing information into a logical order
- abstraction - difficulty in inferring meaning, confusing different meanings of the same word used in different ways, understanding jokes or puns
- organization - difficulty taking bits of information and integrating them into concepts

3) Memory - mild to severe difficulties moving information from short-term to long term memory storage for later retrieval

4) Output

- difficulty conveying information through verbal and/or non-verbal language
- difficulty organizing thoughts, putting ideas into words and communicating these thoughts verbally
- motor - fine motor disabilities (e.g., poor handwriting), as well as gross
- motor disabilities (e.g., clumsiness)

It must be noted that specialized support and accommodations are designed to equalize opportunities, not to lower the academic standards for these students to alter the essential nature of the course and program requirements. There are instances where students are unable to master a particular course because of their disability. It is important to note that accommodations do not guarantee success and it is up to student to do the rest.

Suggested strategies for students with Learning disabilities

- Provide a detailed course syllabus (including papers and projects) well before classes start if possible
- Give reading assignments ahead of time and in both written and oral format
- Speak distinctly and pace instruction carefully
- Repeat, rephrase or reword main points and complex directions
- Write directions on board
- Verbalize what is written, sometimes using a step-by-step sequence
- Use a larger font size when it comes to using an overhead and handouts
- Use concrete examples when explaining complicated issues
- If possible, provide hands-on material when presenting abstract concepts
- Handouts should be clearly typed (font style should be plain and font size should be 12-14)
- Provide opportunities for discussion
- Use visual aids, (illustrations, graphics, charts, videotapes, diagrams, maps, pictures, etc.) when explaining important key terms and concepts and when presenting new vocabulary
- Return tests as soon as possible and, time permitted, go through it with the student
- Copies of lecture notes would be very helpful
- Prepare structured lecture notes
- Provide lecture outlines, review and preview each class

These are just suggested strategies and can be used in any way. Studies show that instructional modifications implemented for an LD student usually seem to benefit the rest of the students in class as well.

Notary Cheque Presentation

Donna Hooker

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At their July 11, 2007 meeting, the Notary Foundation presented Vancouver Community College Foundation with a cheque in the amount of \$30,000 to create a Scholarship and Bursary for full time students in VCC's Legal Administration Program

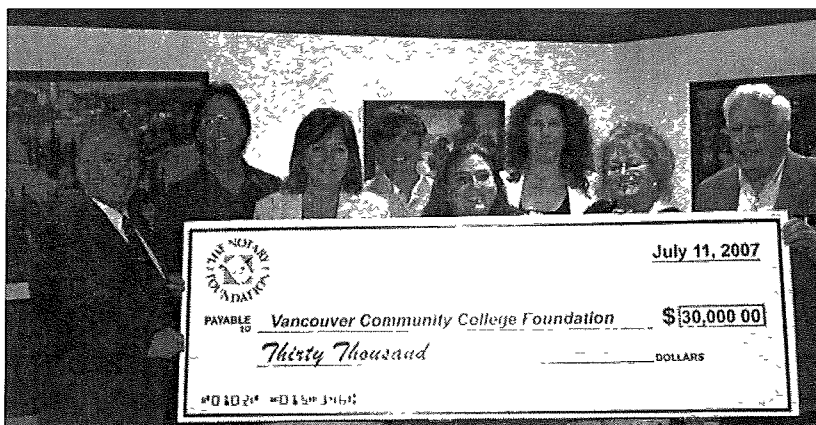
The Notary Foundation is in its 18th year of operation and over the years has supported many students studying in a range of legal programs. "VCC is very pleased to be a recipient of fund-

ing to support VCC's Legal Administration students" says Donna Hooker, Interim Dean for VCC's Centre for Business Studies. "Legal Administrative Assistants are in high demand by notaries public, law firms and the justice system. These funds will assist students to achieve the necessary

"We are delighted to work with a college committed to providing students in BC with an excellent education," says Wayne Braid, Executive Officer of the Notary Foundation of BC. "The Foundation is pleased to assist Vancouver Community College to educate

people to serve the legal needs of British Columbians in the offices of Notaries and other legal professionals throughout our province."

The Notary Foundation



skills to meet this growing demand for skilled legal assistants and also reward those who excel in this field" says Hooker.

meeting was held at VCC's well known JJ's restaurant with culinary cuisine and service provided by VCC students.

Research Interest Group

Deanna Rexe

AVP, Planning & Strategy
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An enthusiastic group of six VCC faculty and staff gathered together for the first time on September 13th, with the idea that we might form an informal peer-support network related to research, for those pursuing graduate studies, or working on publications. The idea for the coffee house came about from a number of half-way discussions on research practices and graduate education, and it was

thought that we might offer each other encouragement, assistance, or moral support.

The first get-together was held at the Barista at the Downtown Campus, and Lila Heilbrunn, Director of Libraries, kindly provided information and ideas for library assistance for those working on scholarly projects here at VCC.

The group determined that we could get together about once a month, on a Thursday in the late afternoon. We are also in the process of establishing an email

group distribution list to facilitate discussion and support.

We would like to extend an invitation to faculty and staff who are involved in graduate research projects or publications to join us - the newly formed Research Interest Group (RIG).

The next session will be at the Library at the Broadway Campus at 4:30 pm on Thursday October 11th - following the Employee BBQ. We will meet at the library front desk.

The Canadian Language Benchmarks and VCC's Applied Programs

Christina Stechishin
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Adult immigrants are often under great pressure to be trained or re-trained as quickly as possible in order to join the Canadian workforce and support themselves and their families. In addition, adult international students are seeking clear, quick and cost-efficient paths to reach their career goals. Such learners have traditionally been required to complete ESL training before entering skills training programs, which usually list the completion of English at the secondary level as a requisite even though the actual language demands of the skills programs may not be that high. As a result, these learners often feel frustrated and dissatisfied, because of the loss of time and money, they cannot move ahead with their working lives as quickly as they would like.

While the CLB were primarily designed to assess language levels for placement into ESL programs and to develop task-based language curricula, it quickly became evident that they could also be used to assess language levels required for successful completion of tasks in applied programs into which many of our students want to move as quickly as possible. Red River College in Manitoba developed a process to accomplish this in the late 1990s, and since that time, many training institutions and colleges, including VCC, have been busy establishing CLB levels for their programs as alternative language pre-requisites for the admis-

sion of applicants whose first language is not English.

The process of 'benchmarking' begins with ESL faculty receiving training in the process. Next, a program is selected and an initial meeting is set up with applied instructors to collect materials, explain the purpose of the project and address questions or concerns. The benchmarkers, working in pairs, familiarise themselves with program materials and then, following a timeline set up in conjunction with applied program instructors, they quietly observe the language tasks in classrooms and labs and make copious notes. Each observer works independently and focuses *only* on the language aspect of tasks required of students. After the "fly-on-the-wall" observations are completed, the benchmarkers also gather data from learners in confidential groups and from instructors through discussion groups or questionnaires.

Once the data has been collected, the benchmarkers discuss and analyse observations as per the guidelines outlined in *A Training Kit – Using the Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000 to Establish Entry Level Requirements for Applied Programists*. They compare the results of their independent observations with each other, and then with the CLB level descriptors for each skill (S, L, R, W) to determine CLB levels needed by students to successfully complete tasks. When this has been done, they write a draft report according to guidelines in the aforementioned training kit, analysing one skill at a time and considering the relevance of any sub-skills. They also take into consideration the frequency of tasks, the

importance of textbooks, and the type and amount of instructional support available to students. For the purpose of consistency, all the reports follow the same format and structure. Once the draft report is complete, two other experienced benchmarkers review it for content and format and the revised draft is then sent to the applied Department Head for approval and/or revision before being presented to the department as a whole. At VCC, the benchmarking process has been completed on 12 of our 21 entry-level applied programs, and we are currently working on 2 more, with 2 additional programs slated for observations in October. The goal is to complete the remaining 5 programs before the end of the 5-year mandate of the CLB Implementation Strategic Initiative in the spring of 2009. (Examples of the VCC benchmark reports completed to date can be found on the college network at J:\Common\Canadian Language Benchmarks)

One of the many benefits of benchmarking applied programs is that it determines program language demands regardless of content, and thus helps ESL learners to focus their language training in advance. Since all new immigrants to Canada must take a CLB-based assessment to determine their eligibility for English classes, they are familiar with the CLB and what these represent. In addition, each program acquires a unique, additional and nationally-recognized language pre-requisite for entry which is often a more accurate predictor of success.

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VCC's collaboration with Maple Leaf Institute of Technology (Dalian, China)

Donna Hooker

Interim Dean, Centre for Business Studies
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I am very pleased to announce that VCC and the Maple Leaf Education Systems Ltd in Dalian China have reached an agreement in principle for the delivery of VCC Hospitality Operations training at MLES' Maple Leaf Institute of Technology in Dalian China. MLES has been delivering BC Grade 12 curriculum in China for 10 years and has an excellent reputation for quality.

MLES, through its Institute of Technology, offers BCIT Com-

puter Technology curriculum, and has recently signed an agreement to deliver the Home Support Assistant program with Camosun College. VCC is pleased to be adding Hospitality training to this exciting project and is hopeful the first cohort of students will begin studies following Chinese New Year in 2008.

VCC's Hospitality Operations training will be delivered in Mandarin and is aimed at preparing graduates to meet the growing demand for hospitality workers in China. VCC will play an important role in setting academic standards and instructor hiring standards, instructor training, identifying facility requirements, supplies and equipment, and in ensuring program quality control.

A media release will be prepared in conjunction with the formal signing of the agreement between VCC and MLES. The formal signing is scheduled for late November in conjunction with an education fair in Dalian where MLES high school students will learn more about post secondary education in BC.

VCC International is looking forward to working with the School of Hospitality in the further development and delivery of this project. Special thanks to Ann Johnson and Allison Kim of Finance for their tremendous support in reaching the agreement stage of this initiative.

Report from Education Council

Since May, Education Council has recommended the following new courses/programs to the Board:

- English for Health Sciences (1)
- DHH Lower Advanced
- DHH Upper Advanced
- DHH Sign Language Skills for Deafened and Hard of Hearing Adults
- Expanding Communication Skills
- Music Directed Ensemble 5 & 6
- Family Literacy Program

The Bachelor of Performing Arts degree was recommended to the Board in June.

Tanis Sawkins, Department Head, ESL – PACE, made a PowerPoint presentation on Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) to the Council.

Tanis explained that the CLB is a tool that gives a standardized description of an individual's ESL/EFL language proficiency by assessing their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Program reviews are being presented at Education Council. The Drafting Technician program review, was presented in September. Program reviews for the Substance Abuse Counselling/Counselling Skills Certificate Program and EEAW, will be presented in October and November respectively.

Voting for Education Council elections will be held on October 09th and October 10th and is coordinated by the Registrar's Office.

Overall Approach to Strategic Planning

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Background:

Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what the College is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future

Vision for the Future was developed in 2002, and refreshed in 2006. It is time for a renewed strategic plan that will

- identify and respond to the key trends having the greatest impact on the College over the next three to five years
- state our mission, goals and strategic directions to achieve these goals
- support annual department and school/centre operational plans, actions
- support effectiveness, evaluation and accountability

The purpose of the plan is to help the College to clarify, assess and adjust the College's direction in response to a changing environment

Planned Approach

To guide planning and renewal processes, we will

- be open, inclusive and consultative
- seek to build consensus in the College and a broad sense of ownership
- use research to inform decision-making and scenario planning, both about VCC and the external community

—include the larger educational context, changes in post-secondary education in BC, technology, our communities and the economy

Stages of Planning

- Stage 1 Design of process, including community engagement plan
- Stage 2 Research undertaken, and facilitated dialogue
- Stage 3 Development of draft plan by management
- Stage 4 Review, feedback from community
- Stage 5 College approval processes

To accomplish this, we will

- conduct research and support dialogue from September to March
- develop draft plans in April – June
- solicit feedback from Board of Governors in June
- solicit feedback from the college and community in September – October
- review and submit for approval in November

Timelines:

June 2007
Develop planning timeline and overview
Dale to alert Management Group to expectations, timelines
RSS begin to formulate research questions to support background reports and materials

Summer 2007
Conceptualize research agenda
Initiate research projects as possible

Finalize research and development plan for Fall
Finalize planning process and community engagement plan

Formulate visual identity of planning process

September 2007

Launch of Planning by President
Website for planning, President's Update

Fall and Winter 2007/2008

Facilitated community engagement
Public speakers to encourage dialogue and employee development
Organized events for dialogue on topics – “issue tables”
Facilitated and formal external consultation

Research and reporting processes supported by RSS

Final reports completed by March 15, 2008

April 2008

All activities completed, and all reports provided to Management Group

May 2008

Facilitated process for development of draft strategic plan

June 2008

Presentation of draft to Board at Board Retreat for Board input

September 2008

Distribution of draft
Feedback from college community
Individuals (website feedback)
Stakeholder groups
Campus forums

October 2008

Formal review of draft by Education Council, Operations Council for advice to Board

November 2008

Presentation of draft and advice to Board for approval

Committee Reports

Distributed Learning Committee

DLC has been somewhat quiet over the summer, but met in September for a presentation by Betty Noble on how to make on-line learning accessible to all, and we also heard from Bienda Appleton on issues related to copyright in a digital age. Two surveys are being developed for distribution this fall – one on educational technology requirements in the classroom, and one on the faculty development needs related to distributed learning. The 3 year Distributed Learning Implementation Plan is being compiled and should be available shortly, in time to inform the 2008/2009 budget process.

Education Administrators Group

The Educational Administrators Group (EAG) has been discussing Program Review/Renewal, affiliations and articulations, and new curriculum development. They have hosted guests speaking on a range of topics, including copyright, alumni awards and the Business Intelligence system. EAG will receive a presentation on Essential Skills in November. EAG is also discussing educational policies for Program Review, Program Advisory Committees, Affiliation Agreements, the Granting of Credentials, Degree Standards and Transfer Credits. These will be making their way to Policy Committee and Education Council over the next few months.

Management Group

The VCC IT Operations Review Project Report was presented at the September meeting of Management Group. Members of the Group have been involved in Planning/Strategic Planning Sessions, in preparation for 2008-09 Strategic Planning. An Environmental Advisory Group has been created. This group will advise both Management Group and Executive on best practices in environmental initiatives.

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than a simple numerical score from a single language test. This CLB profile of a program is very attractive to students, who have a much clearer understanding of the unarticulated linguistic expectations that they will have to meet.

On a wider scale, VCC is recognized across Canada as a leader in this area. VCC instructors were instrumental in setting up a Na-

tional Working Group on Benchmarking at the TESL Canada Conference in October 2006 and developing a database of all benchmarked programs across the country, including programs from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario. VCC faculty are in constant demand at both provincial and federal levels for their expertise in this area. For example, we have been requested to provide benchmarking training for other colleges in BC; we provide infor-

Upcoming Events at Vancouver Community College

Settlement Fair
4th Floor
Broadway Campus
Wednesday, October 10th

Info Night
Concourse
Downtown Campus
Wednesday, October 17th

Educational Forums
Room 419
Downtown Campus
Tuesday, October 30th
Room 5025
Broadway Campus
Friday, November 02nd

Volunteer Fair
Concourse
Downtown Campus
Wednesday, November 14th

Awards Ceremony
Auditorium
Broadway Campus
Friday, November 16th

Employee Recognition
Staff Lounge
Broadway Campus
Thursday, December 13th

mation sessions for government-sponsored projects with various provincial ministries, and two of our most knowledgeable instructors are currently involved in a project with the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks to develop CLB levels for 39 Red Seal trades.

†Lennig, L. & Sawkins, T. (2005). *A Training Kit – Using the Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000 to Establish Entry Level Requirements for Applied Programs*, Province of British Columbia.