



February 2008

Education @ VCC

Volume 2, Issue 3

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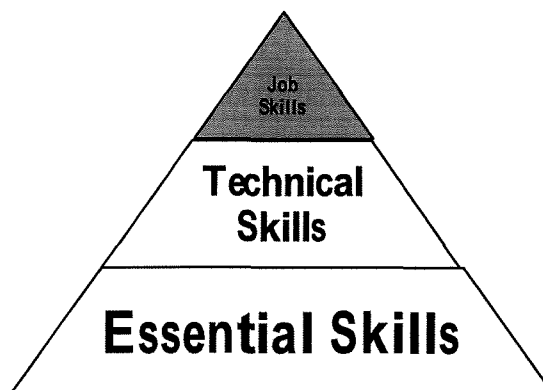
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Essential Skills @ VCC

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Essential Skills provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. They are the skills needed for work, learning and life.



Through extensive research, the Government of Canada and other national and international agencies have identified and validated nine Essential Skills. These skills are used in nearly every occupation and throughout daily life in different ways and at different levels of complexity.

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Education Leave—

It's leave you take for study, research or industry immersion. To apply, first, read section 8.3.1 of the Collective Agreement. This section specifies the nature and the limits of Education Leave. Second, submit an application letter and covering page to the Chair of the Committee, c/o the Office of the VP, Education. The Education Leave Committee meets in March to adjudicate applications, recommend who should receive Education Leave, and how much of the 33-month allotment each person should receive. The application submission deadline is Friday, February 29th, 2008 — contact your Dean's Secretary for an Ed Leave package.

Creating a Globally Minded Campus

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In mid-October, three of us were fortunate to participate in several workshops offered at the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA) conference. This gathering brought together several hundred delegates from the Pacific Northwest and introduced us to some outstanding, expert facilitators.

What follows are selected highlights and lessons from these sessions. We believe they have high relevance to our VCC Community and can serve to guide us as we pursue approaches and strategies for creating a truly globally-minded campus. As we move into the new year, these will shape the work of our Diversity and Internationalization Committees in pursuing our collective goals.

Jane Knight, a well known scholar of the international dimension of higher education, defines internationalization as the "process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution of higher education."

VCC is a multicultural centre of learning. According to the 2006/07 VCC Student Census Survey, 61% of VCC students are not of white ethnicity. Approximately 52% of the students surveyed were not born in Canada. Almost the

same percentage of students did not learn English as their first language as a child, and 85% of students reported that the language they learned as a child remains the language they speak at home most often today. At the NAFSA conference, the metaphor of culture as an iceberg was used to illustrate how only certain aspects of culture are visible to us; much more of culture and how it influences behaviour and perspective is submerged and requires us to look deeper to be inclusive and responsive to our learners.

Much of the workshop on becoming a globally minded campus, dealt with identifying the perceptions and values that differentiate culture and how culture influences how we teach, provide service, and how our students learn. Do we value independence or interdependence? Do we express our emotions outwardly and view those who are reserved as cool or self-possessed? How important is directness in communication or is it better to be more indirect with suggestion and implying? Do we focus on rules or relationships? For example, research shows that Canadians highly value universalism with its focus on rules, rules being consistent, one truth or reality and a "get down to business" ethic. Many cultures, such as Chinese and Russian peoples, value relationships, flexibility of rules, multiple perspectives of reality and a "get to know you" approach (for more cross-cultural data visit www.7d-culture.nl/index1.html).

What we learned is that an internationalized, or globally minded college, is one that takes time to reflect on practice, works to create inclusive curriculum, is skilled in

managing multicultural classrooms, promotes cultural references that are not ethnocentric in their examples, is aware of how learning styles and needs vary in a multicultural classroom, and possesses student advising, admissions and support services that are skilled in providing assistance to multicultural applicants and students in ways that make sense to them. We learned that we need to consider (multi)culture in how we design, manage and practice teaching, learning and service. We learned that one size does not fit all.

Want to learn more? Thompson Rivers University has produced a resource called *A Globally Minded Campus: A Resource for Academic Departments* (2007) which is available on TRU's website.

At Malaspina University College in Nanaimo, faculty development has been an important component of "Interculturalizing the Internationalized Curriculum" (the title of an excellent workshop given by Todd Odgers). Although Malaspina has a very substantial international student population, the focus has been on both foreign and domestic students. All students and faculty are invited to examine their beliefs, cultural knowledge, biases and stereotypes.

Taking a transformational approach to interculturalization requires both individual and organizational commitment. At Malaspina, faculty were invited to a three hour introductory session to discuss teaching and learning in an intercultural classroom. Afterwards, they could apply for a three day retreat which culminated in...

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Internationalizing the Curriculum: A Retreat, a Workout and a Transformation in the Making

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Internationalization? I thought I knew what it was. Isn't it simply getting diverse perspectives into classroom readings and discussions? Well, that is just part of it. I found it is much more. Commonly, "internationalizing curriculum" is defined as an on-going process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of an institution (Knight, 1994) and infusing these dimensions into all the policies and programs of the institution. It reaches into every corner and facet of our work as teachers, and the institutions we teach in. It includes bringing students to our campuses from far and wide and helping them to feel at home. As well, it is educating our domestic students to function effectively in a diverse and multicultural world. It also includes putting college policies about cultural inclusiveness and awareness into practice, and infusing the teaching and content of courses with knowledge, skills and values that accept, appreciate, and develop a broad multicultural worldview and mindset.

For three days in May 2006, I immersed myself in the "Internationalizing the Curriculum Academy" at Malaspina University College, sponsored by the International Education Department there. Along with over forty other teachers and administrators from colleges across the continent, we

explored what it means to internationalize our curricula – whatever it is –, and how we could implement measures to move the process ahead when we got back to work.

The conference itself was a fascinating journey. We started by looking at internationalization from the institutional and organizational level. Speakers Betty Leask, Hanneke Teekens, and Bronwyn Jenkins shared highlights and challenges from their extensive experiences with internationalization at their respective universities in Australia, Holland, and British Columbia. Their words set a foundation for each of us to think about the unique characteristics and possibilities at our own institutions.

Then, we completed an aptitude test of sorts, a diagnostic and development tool called the intercultural development inventory, by Milton Bennett, to discover where each of us fit on a scale of six stages of developing intercultural sensitivity. The stages progressed from denial, to defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and finally integration. This part of the academy had tender and anxious moments as we examined our ratings privately. These explained our personal strengths and weaknesses in the ways we think about cultural differences and work with people from other cultural backgrounds. It struck me as very real, accurate and informative. The inventory scoring provided suggestions for how we might develop our intercultural understanding – never pushing us, but like all good transformative learning activities only inviting us to consider changing ourselves – in our own ways

and at our own paces.

What boggled my mind during the first day was how many layers and possibilities exist within this concept of internationalization. They include college policies, facilities, support staff, programs, courses, teachers, students and more. Our skilled facilitators, Todd Odgers and Isabelle Giroux, both from Malaspina College, did a great job making the theory real and practical – sharing their own voyages of discovery as individuals and teachers.

The poster session on the last day summarized our experiences and learning as we shared with each other the steps we planned to take, some concrete and some still being formed. My poster identified processes and content to add or revise in one course in the Provincial Instructor Diploma Program. Content-wise, I am working toward adding readings about culturally diverse approaches to teaching and learning, with cases and snapshots from a wider range of cultures. Processes that help "internationalize" my courses include using classroom agreements that focus attention on the need to show respect for diversity in style and thinking, modeling respect and inquiry about differences, and developing students skills in responding to exclusive hurtful remarks made in class.

VCC is the perfect place for internationalization. We have the treasure of a rich cultural mix within our staff, faculty, and student populations. We have institutional policies and practices that support inclusion and respect for all.

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From the Centre for Instructional Development...

VCC is Moving to Moodle

Karen Belfer, Dean,
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As many of you are probably aware there has been great debate over the past several years as to what program we should use to deliver our distributed delivery courses. A much-awaited solution to this debate has been reached.

One of the pillars of the work performed by the Centre for Instructional Development (CID) is to support the Distributed Learning Plan (DLP). One of the most important resources required to enable a DLP is the Learning Management System (LMS) used to mediate the educational processes.

VCC like many other BC Higher Education Institutions had been using BCCampus' WebCT shared service as its LMS. This WebCT service was free for VCC and included a comprehensive set of support mechanisms (e.g. hosted systems approach, designer access to WebCT production server, stable and robust infrastructure, 8am-10pm 6 days a week help desk support for faculty and students).

In June 2007 BCCampus (<http://www.bccampus.ca/AboutBCCampus/ServicePlan.htm>) informed all institutions using their WebCT shared services, that as of June 2008 access to WebCT (<http://www.blackboard.com/>) would be discontinued. As a replacement they offered two options; Desire2Learn (<http://www.desire2learn.com/>) and

Moodle (<http://moodle.org/>) while maintaining a similar service model.

At that point in time, VCC had to make a decision, what platform to adopt next (BCCampus Desire2Learn, BCCampus Moodle, or VCC in-house Moodle)

Initial research (June 2007) pointed at Desire2Learn as the best option:

1. The development and use of tools was very similar to WebCT,
2. The conversion processes from WebCT to Desire2Learn for both faculty development and content management would be five times faster than that required for Moodle,
3. Is a well know and stable Proprietary application, and
- 4 Utilized the existing BCCampus service model.

As VCC was gearing up to make the change, Moodle usage around the world increased beyond belief as many institutions adopted Moodle (e.g. Open University of UK, Athabasca, Ohio State) as their LMS. Even amongst Higher Education institutions in BC the adoption of Moodle was four times higher than that of Desire2Learn once WebCT was not an option (BCCampus data).

At the same time, a small number of faculty at VCC had been experimenting with Moodle, the application was running smoothly, and found it to be easy to learn and use.

Further research also showed that faculty development time for

Moodle site running on the VCC servers would be less than that for Desire2Learn, even though the content conversion would still be about double.

Most important was the latest move from BCCampus to not include all of the elements previously featured with the WebCT service model, thus reducing the Shared Services offered.

This forced a reconsideration to determine what Learning Management System would be most beneficial college wide?

After long consideration of all variables, heavy consultation with BCCampus and many stakeholders at VCC, a decision was made to use our own in-house Moodle. This would allow us to have direct control over the integration processes we put in place, the number of sites we have (e.g. testing, development, delivery), and the server space we use for each course.

To ensure a smooth transition, the CID will work closely with the schools/departments/programs that are now offering courses through BCCampus, and help them with the conversion and future delivery of their courses in Moodle. We also look forward to working with faculty/departments/schools that want to start implementing Distributed Learning activities in their courses/programs.

If you wish to learn more about the VCC Distributed Learning Plan or CID initiatives please contact Alan Davis or Karen Belfer

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A Round of Applause to the College Community!

VCC2015 Strategic Planning Secretariat
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Thanks everyone for the overwhelmingly, enthusiastic response to the visioning component of the strategic planning process. All of us on the Planning Secretariat would like to express our sincere appreciation to the college community for the thoughtful feedback provided throughout the visioning process; we had hundreds of attendees from all areas of the college participate in over 25 visioning sessions. In the coming weeks we will be posting a summative report of that process. In the meantime, we encourage you to visit www.vcc2015.vcc.ca and view the incredible amount of idea

sharing and opinion that has been submitted thus far

The next phase of the strategic planning process brings together the college community in ten working groups. We are pleased to announce that more than 100 people have volunteered or accepted nominations to participate in groups covering such topics as campus planning and student recruitment. The working group phase officially kicked off on January 18th with a session for all working group members on how to think strategically. For the next three months, working groups will meet regularly to research, analyze and consult with the college community on the following ten topics that emerged from the fall visioning work.

Please feel free to contact the VCC2015 Planning Secretariat if you have any questions regarding the working groups.

Find out more online! There are several ways to connect:

At <http://vcc2015.vcc.ca>

By email through vcc2015@vcc.ca

Or by phone at 604.443.8646.

We welcome your ideas, insight, suggestions -- and your vision -- for VCC in 2015.

Get involved in VCC's strategic planning process!

Send in your submission, contribute to the VCC2015 blogs, or drop by the planning office to chat.

Got a question? askaway ...

Virginia Adams, Department Head
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askaway is an award winning library chat reference service accessible to VCC students and employees. This service complements and enhances the VCC Library in-person and email reference with which you are already familiar by providing real time virtual reference service

Established by the Electronic Library Network (ELN) in 2006 to serve students, faculty and staff at publicly funded post-secondary institutions in BC, the askaway collaborative service is staffed by librarians and reference assistants from post-secondary institutions across the province. You may be chatting with a librarian from SFU, BCIT or VCC! All service providers, regardless of their location, will be able to help you with your research needs

Creating a Globally Minded Campus *(continued from page 2)*

... a poster session in which they presented their personal learning, insights and change. Faculty values and assumptions influence curriculum and classroom dynamics, so development opportunities such as

those provided at Malaspina are key to implementing change

Participation in these workshops, exposure to the experiences of sister colleges and lessons learned regarding interculturalization, internationalization, and globaliza-

tion offer both exciting and challenging opportunities for VCC to explore. As we embark upon our collective visioning for 2015, the themes from this conference serve to inform, infuse and inspire our work at a multitude of levels.

*continued from page 1***There are nine Essential Skills:**

1. Reading Text refers to reading material that is in the form of sentences or paragraphs
2. Document Use means the reading of materials in information displays; such as maps, forms, schedules, diagrams, and catalogues
3. Numeracy refers to the workers' use of numbers and their being required to think in quantitative terms
4. Writing refers to writing texts and writing in documents (for example, filling in forms); includes non-paper-based writing (for example, typing on a computer)
5. Oral Communication pertains primarily to the use of speech to give and exchange thoughts and information by workers in an occupational group
6. Working with Others examines the extent to which employees work with others to carry out their tasks
7. Continuous Learning examines the requirement for workers in an occupational group to participate in an ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge
8. Thinking Skills refers to the process of evaluating ideas or information to reach a rational decision. The six main components of Thinking Skills are:
Problem Solving
Decision Making
Critical Thinking
Job Task Planning and Organizing
Significant Use of Memory
Finding Information
9. Computer Use indicates the variety and complexity of computer use within the occupational group

Do you find that some of your students are struggling either in course work or in practicum? They could be among the nearly 40% of the Canadian population who do not have the Essential Skills to be successful in these situations

How can these students be helped? There are upgrading classes. There are the Learning Centres and now VCC will be opening the Essential Skills Centre to offer Essential Skills support for

both students and faculty

The Essential Skills Centre will help students get the skills they need for their VCC program and their career. Through assessment, classroom instruction and guided independent study, the Centre will help lay the foundation for success. Students will be able to access instruction either before or during their career programs.

The Essential Skills Centre is also the faculty resource for Essential Skills materials, training and contacts. The Centre can help you make sure your graduates have the foundation skills necessary to be successful in your program and in their careers.

The VCC Essential Skills Centre will be launching later this Spring. Contact Jim Peacock, Centre Coordinator, by telephone (604.443.8689) or in person, for more details.

Jim can usually be found on the main floor of the Downtown campus, in behind Media Services – keep going – over on the Cambie Street side – yes – you found it – room 236!

See you soon!

Research Interest Group

The Research Interest Group met on January 17th at the Broadway Campus, and had a lively discussion on ethics in research. Many thanks to Sue Aro, who gave an overview of the VCC Policy on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects, and Diane Batty, who shared her experience being the first applicant

for research approval through the new process.

Future gatherings will be from 4:30 - 6:00pm on alternating campuses: Feb 21 (DTN); March 20 (BWY); April 17 (DTN), May 15 (BWY); June 19 (DTN)

The meeting on February 21st will be held in room 419 Downtown. Topic: Techniques and Tips for Research Management - how do

we manage our files, artifacts, writing etc?

The purpose of this group is to provide peer support, encouragement, and a collaborative space for those of us in the college community interested in graduate level or scholarly research, and publication. Please feel free to join our email distribution list for notices, or contact one of the current participants.

ASP Update

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The Aboriginal Service Plan that VCC submitted jointly last September with Capilano College and 8 other Aboriginal partner organizations received a total of \$1,080,000 for 2008 in funding from AVED, with renewal of the funding in future contingent on the achievement of the ASP's

stated goals.

This was announced in late December, was the biggest award for this round of ASP applications, and the Coastal Corridor Consortium received a bonus to support its unique collaborative approach.

The 10 partner C3 is in the process of being established and this will provide VCC in particular with new resources for the support of its Aboriginal learners and some

new program development resources in various areas

Alan Davis has been chairing the C3 steering committee, with Ron Johnston and Barbara Ash also attending. Terms of reference for the proposed C3 board are being drawn up.

If you would like a copy of the C3 Aboriginal Service Plan, please contact Melissa Grover at mgrover@vcc.ca.

Report from Education Council

Karen Shortt was elected Chair at the December 04th Education Council meeting. The Education Council Executive was also elected, and representatives will serve a one year term beginning January 2008.

Council has adopted New Curriculum Development documents. New documents can be obtained by contacting the Council Secretary, Melissa Grover. Old documents will no longer be accepted.

Council approved a motion to cancel the Electronics Common Core Program. This recommendation will be reviewed by the College Board.

TESOL will now be offered as a base-funded program.

The ad hoc Committee on the Education Plan made recommendations to the Council regarding the presentation of the Education Plan. The Council Secretary can be contacted for a copy of the recommendations.

An Aboriginal Stream of the Culinary Arts Program was approved and will be piloted in September 2008.

Education Council ended 2007 with a Visioning Session at the December 04th meeting.

Newly elected Chair, Karen Shortt, presided over the January 09th, 2008 meeting.

Following the schedule outlined in the recommendations from the ad hoc Committee on the Education Plan, Alan Davis submitted a memo to Council giving context for the Education Plan and reviewing Training Plan changes under consideration.

Education Council approved a new LPN-BSN Transitions program and the new Orff Teacher Training Level 2 course. Council also approved changes to the curriculum in the Dental Assisting and Dental Reception program and the EEAW program.

Council will be voting on the Program Review and Renewal policy and the Affiliation Agreements policy in February. A vote on the motion to approve the Granting of Credentials policy, the Degree Standards policy and the Program Advisory Committee policy has been postponed to March.

Internationalizing the Curriculum
continues from page 3

And yet we can do more to celebrate our solid foundation and go further. We can, and I trust will, be leaders in internationalizing every part of our institution and

every program that we teach. People from around the globe come together at VCC and we can use internationalization practices to make the most of that for the benefit of everyone.

To learn more about internationalizing the curriculum, read articles on the subject by these authors - J.M. Bennett, H. de Wit, J. Knight, B. Leask, P. Maidstone, and T. Whalley - and watch for developments here at VCC.

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Committee Reports

Distributed Learning Committee

Theresa Lannan presented a VCC Portal Update to the Committee: Pre-launch activities will occur in January through March and ICS will be enlisting the support of the VCC community to work with Lawrence Ng. An initial Beta Test deployment will be to a focus group of students and instructors.

Neil King provided the Committee with an ICS update.

Wendy Seale-Bakes spoke to the Committee, and presented a Power-Point slideshow, about the ePortfolio project she has been managing. The ePortfolio project is a collaboration between VCC and NEC, and will run for three years. The ePortfolios are carried on the Chalk and Wire platform and can be accessed at: www.chalkandwire.com/vcc.

Karen Belfer will be presenting the Distributed Learning Plan at the February meeting.

Education Administrators Group

EAG will be hosting Maggie Ross for a presentation on the Human Rights Coordinator.

Also on the agenda are the Olympics and the 2010 closure.

EAG will be reviewing an International Experience course proposal and the topic of PLAR.

Management Group Highlights

VCC has made a bid to the Ontario Attorney General for a \$2,000,000 contract to offer a Court Interpreting Program. VCC is a finalist in the competition.

New and revised policies were presented for review: a revised FOI-POP policy, the Aboriginal Enrolment policy and the Emergency Management policy.

The target date for the launch of the new VCC website is February 2008.

Ben Guanzon will begin his position as Director of ICS in February.

The School of Music, through its Aboriginal Music Lab is collaborating with the Four Host Nations Secretariat in assembling an audio-visual presentation to be shown at BC/Canada House in Beijing from May 2008 until the conclusion of the Beijing Olympics. The project titled "Drum Song" is a collaboration between traditional and contemporary Four Host Nations drummers and singers and their Chinese counterparts in the People's Republic of China and Vancouver.

Upcoming Events at Vancouver Community College

Career Fair

Downtown Campus Foyer
March 12

(faculty—please encourage your students to attend)
10:00am-3:30pm

Information Night

Downtown Campus Foyer

April 16
4:30pm-6:30pm

Awards Ceremony

Broadway Campus Auditorium
May 22, May 23

Graduation

Broadway Campus Auditorium
June 26

Strategic Planning Working Groups

January—April

Dates and locations available at:
<http://vcc2015.vcc.ca>

Education Forum

Given the large number of meetings related to VCC 2015, the training plan and (shortly) the budget, having an Educational Forum may be over doing it, so we'll convene one as soon as the dust has settled.

Items for Education @ VCC can be submitted anytime, by anyone. Our next edition will be in March, and the deadline for that issue will be Monday, February 18, 2008. Please submit your submissions to mgrover@vcc.ca.