

HISTORY ARTICULATION MEETING

8 May 1996

~~Kwantlen University College~~
Richmond, B.C.

Attendance:

Patricia Roy, UVic (Chair); John Belshaw, UCC (Secretary); Thor Frohn-Nielsen, Kwantlen; Bill Sloan, Selkirk; Bob McDonald, UBC; Andrea Smith, Langara; George Davison, CNC; Cheryl Warsh, Malaspina; Frank Frketich, Courtenay (representing the Ministry); Elmiro Argento, Douglas; Elizabeth Peerless, Douglas, (Liaison Dean); David del Mar, UNBC; Simo Norme, North Island (Port Alberni); Tom Roulstone, Northern Lights; Karl Koth, OUC; Al Seager, SFU; John Hart, NWCC (Terrace); Donna Lomas, College of the Rockies; Towser Jones, Capilano; Eric Davis, UCFV.

1) Approval of Agenda:

Moved by George Davison; 2nd by Donna Lomas. Passed.

2) Minutes of the 1995 Meeting:

Motion to accept moved by Towser Jones; 2nd by Bill Sloan. Passed.

3) Chair's Report:

a) Letter to Presidents of University Colleges. At the 1995 meeting the chair was directed to communicate to the presidents of the Okanagan, Cariboo, Malaspina and Fraser Valley university-colleges concerns of the articulation committee with respect to support for research. The reply from Malaspina's president evinced a continuing administrative skepticism toward scholarly activity. The Chair undertook to secure the three other replies and to provide them to the university-college articulation reps who will then formulate a response.

b) Liaison Meeting. The Chair participated in a meeting with Ministry officials to discuss concerns of this committee. The relevant points identified by the Chair were:

- i) the Ministry wants to simplify transfer credits between schools and colleges, colleges and universities, etc.;
- ii) the Transfer Guide will be on-line in September;
- iii) the Ministry would like to establish a common standard for letter grades;
- iv) the discourse of Ministry officials is peppered with several key words and concepts, which include 'life-long learning', 'laddering' (i.e., rationalizing), 'seamless' (i.e., K to 16, where 16 = fourth year university), 'bridging' (e.g., linking music conservatory qualifications to university credits; switching from academic to vocational programmes), and 'employability'.

Discussion followed this summary, in which Prior Learning Assessment was discussed. Andrea Smith identified this as a prospective workload issue; already at Terrace this has

been taken on board in negotiations, a development considered by some in the room to be 'ominous'.

The Chair was encouraged to keep abreast of these initiatives.

4) New History 12 Curriculum.

Frank Frketich presented an outline of developments in the area of Grade 12 History curriculum. These represent the first revisions since 1988. Document ("History 12 IRP: Introduction") was circulated to those present. The new curriculum is tentatively scheduled for implementation in 1999. Various aspects of the proposed revisions were discussed.

5) Reports from the Members of the Articulation Committee. On the whole, departments reported falling enrollments and the expectation of more of the same in 1996-97. With few exceptions hiring freezes or 'gels' were in place and pressure was increasing on what few sessional positions remained. Much of the specific information is tabulated below, but individual developments of consequence include the development of a 5-year concurrent B.A./B.Ed. at Malaspina, an upcoming US History position at UBC, a cooperative grad programme initiative involving UBC and SFU, and the start of a History Majors programme and an Applied Studies in History initiative at UCFV. Bill Sloan indicated that reduced entry standards at UBC, SFU and Calgary (along with bursaries and other money incentives to students) appear to be having a negative impact on college enrollments, especially in the south-east.

6) New Business:

a) Teaching Assignments (OUC) :In an effort to ensure credibility of its emerging programme, OUC has instituted a rigorous vetting procedure for faculty who want to teach upper level courses. Karl Koth submitted the procedure to the committee for input. A discussion followed.

b) First Year History courses (Kwantlen): Tom Thorner and Thor Frohn-Nielsen introduced concerns that were first raised by Kwantlen students that SFU's first-year courses no longer typically require the writing of a substantial essay. Allen Seager confirmed that this, indeed, was the practice and that it stemmed from, among other things, the increasingly widespread commercial traffic in essays. Seager indicated that the characteristic grading distribution at SFU was now a mix of papers on readings, and exams.

This introduced a discussion about our 'Learning Outcomes Objectives', to use the new grade 12 curriculum's phrase. It emerged that there exists a considerable difference of opinion between and within departments regarding the emphasis placed on essays. While this made the issue impossible to resolve at this stage, Bill Sloan pointed out the irony of

institutions offering u/t programmes are assigning essays so as to prepare students for universities that no longer demand essay writing skills.

This led into the next item on the agenda....

c) "Skills" and "Writing" courses (SFU): Allen Seager made the case that there is a need to demystify history so that good, hardworking students can do well. At the centre of this is the question of methodology courses and historiography courses. Because these are perceived as overly theoretical, students tend to avoid them where possible. Another aspect is the development of writing skills. Some committee members indicated that they permit or, in some cases, encourage preliminary submissions and rewrites. This issue also provoked a considerable discussion, though it was not resolved with any sort of motion.

7) Other New Business:

a) BCARS: It was announced that the Provincial Government is moving ahead with plans to significantly alter the organization of BCARS, dividing it into units that deal with provincial government records and private documents. The growing trend toward 'records management' rather than cultural artifact preservation drew criticism from around the table.

ACTION: A letter expressing the committee's concerns to be composed by the committee secretary and sent to Mr. Jo Surich, BC Chief Information Officer, at the earliest opportunity.

b) Next Meeting: In order to facilitate attendance at the BC Studies conference at Nanaimo next spring, the 1997 meeting will be hosted by the University of Victoria on the 2nd of May.

c) Thanks were expressed to our host colleagues at Kwantlen University-College, and the meeting dissolved.