

HAC Meeting

Mon, May 04, 2026

08:56 Meeting called to order by Chair – Niall Christie, Langara

1. Territorial Acknowledgement: Niall Acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

2. Motion to approve Agenda – moved Adrianna Bakos. Approved by consensus

3. Motion to approve minutes from 2025 - moved Whitney Wood. No changes.

4. Institutional Reports:

Nicolas Kenny, SFU:

- Welcome to SFU.
- Significant financial cutbacks at SFU have produced a feeling of impending doom. No budget for sessional hires, precarity of staffing positions; even field trips and other activities for students can be difficult to support.
- Decline in History enrolments continues to be a source of concern.
- The graduate program is also suffering from a reduced funding environment. Only two expected in coming students for September.
- External review cycle underway; since January the department has undertaken a series of micro retreats to discuss the state of various aspects of department life (curriculum, graduate program, working environment, staffing, workload). The self-study and Fall site visit have and will continue to provide the opportunity for discussion about how best to respond to the current climate.
- On the bright side, History welcomed Dr John Bird into a new position in Indigenous History in Fall 2025. Dr Bird has already started making significant contributions to our curriculum.

Darcy Ingram, Selkirk College:

- Duff Sutherland retired last year, Takaia Larsen and Darcy split the History Program between them. 8 courses offered, down from 10 last year. Equivalent to a single full-time position, but both faculty teach other things too.
- Latin American History courses retired, replaced with Environmental History and History of Animals.
- Budgets tight, lots of cuts in various areas. Priority to keep second year courses as a strategy to maintain enrolments at both first and second year. Necessity at a small institution like Selkirk.
- Kootenay School of the Arts closed.

Cedric Bolz, Douglas College:

- Cedric is in fourth year doing the job as chair. Julian Brooks will be taking over in September. Is here today to shadow or observe.

- Enrollments have been reasonably robust, or quite robust, at Douglas College over the 2025-26 academic year with over a 90% fill rate, up basically 1.6% over the over the previous year.
- Douglas offers 53 sections with eight regular, full time faculty, one contract faculty.
- Freeze on contracts at Douglas College for this year and for the foreseeable future. Dean has informed us that we have been reasonably diligent in terms of fiscal prudence, but about 17% down in terms of total enrollments of international students at Douglas.
- Business management has been hit extremely hard, and we have been asked to sort of collectively absorb the brunt of that downturn. There has been some strange stuff going on. Even with filling to 90% and sometimes close to 100% sections have been cut. System is broken in terms of what regular, full time faculty are being paid vs. what the college ultimately makes, in terms of students in seats. Even courses with fill rates of close to 100% in psychology have been just simply cut and done away with.
- A couple of faculty have returned: one from parental leave one, from a Ed leave; Carling Benninger was on Ed leave, Dennis McKim on parental leave. So everything in F 2025 was sort of back to normal. Roy Zhang from SFU has been doing a great job filling in for Robin Wiley, who has been seconded by FPSE for the last term. Although Robin's sections have been whittled down to contract status, and anytime there are low filling sections it hits the lowest person in terms of seniority, so Roy's ability to fill Robin's full time sections has been gradually whittled away.
- Other than that, two new courses have been developed and taught. The one by Carling Benanger, history 3370, Indigenous Wisdom, Settler Colonialism, was taught in December of 2025. Sally Mennill has developed a third-year course on disease, which will be offered this year. We have two new courses, one on urban history, one on the history of sport.
- We do still have the Royal Tower being built across the street from us. \$293 million project, 20,000 square feet, 30 new classrooms, computer labs, etc... And for the first time in Douglas College history, 368 student beds. So we are turning into a residency in terms of what we offer - all in the time of we have been told to brace for contraction across the board.

Meghan Bowe, Columbia College:

- We have three full time history faculty
- There is one correction to make to the spreadsheet regarding contact hours. Faculty have 4 contact hours per week, plus 80 minutes of office hours per week, per course.
- History fill rates are good, averaging 96%; however, sections were cut this year so fill rates look better than it really is.
- Teaching loads have been reduced from a maximum of 9 courses to 7 courses per year, with a half course release.
- HIST 200 "How History is Made" (a methods course) was recently articulated. Thank you to KPU and UFV for transfer agreements.
- Columbia College turned 90 years old this year and decided to undergo a merger to survive the current enrollment crisis.
- The college is relaunching as a new university offering a Bachelor of Arts & Science degree that centers on problem based learning and self-authored degrees, sometime in 2026-2027.
- History faculty are contributing to new university programming.
- The New university will continue offering first- and second-year courses with our existing transfer agreements; these courses will serve as the "foundation courses" for students completing 4-year degrees. Established associate degrees will continue to be offered.

Chris Hyland, Alexander College:

- In a period of sustained student enrolment contraction primarily due to federal immigration policy changes, notably the Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) mandate.
 - Peak enrolment in 2025 at about 4,500 students; currently under 2000 students; probably stabilizing around 1300 students in the fall.
 - Lower student enrolments affecting staffing levels
 - Lost 1 full-time history position and 2 sessionals
 - Two full-time history positions and one sessional remaining
 - Lower student enrolments affecting course availability and scheduling
 - Fall 2025 – 15 history sections; Spring 2026 – 8 history sections
 - Graduation and transfer credit requirements harder to meet as required courses offered less frequently
- In response, the institution is pursuing and expanding non-PAL programming and revenue streams
 - Bachelor's degree authorization – BBA, BSC
 - Online teaching for overseas students
 - French language training and testing center
- Substantial shift in recruitment demographics and admissions.
 - Applications from African countries now represent a majority of the applicant pool
 - Applications from India have declined significantly.
 - Applications from China have increased moderately, supported in part by expanded program offerings and online study options.
- Shift from individual course development to broader program-level planning
 - Expand to a four-year college with bachelor's degrees
 - Business Management, AI
 - History and the Humanities in support of Business and the Sciences
 - Development and refinement of courses in the humanities has stopped

Adrianna Bakos, University of the Fraser Valley:

- We are currently in program review. Sally Mennill from Douglas will be an external reviewer.
- Potential curricular changes coming. Next year, we add two new hires. This year, Kate Godfrey is our new Latin Americanist. She is from Penn State, and Sebastian Hubel, who many of you will know, has taken up a position as a tenure-track position teaching in the area of modern history, most specifically Holocaust and genocide studies. We do have one retirement this year, but of course, as with many others, this person will not be replaced due to fiscal issues.
- Our course enrollments continue to be robust. In fact, this summer, we had to limit the number of extra classes that we put on. In response, we had, for one class, 121 people on the wait list. But that is a function of the fact that our strategic enrollment plan has cut back on the number of sections that we can offer.
- So it looks good, but it is the bigger picture is not great. The problem for us is a structural problem as well, because although we were hit by the fall in international students, we have the other problem, which is that our domestic enrollment is rising. We're over 100% of our capacity for domestic enrollment, which sounds very good, except for every single student that we take in over 100% we lose money on because the provincial grant is capped at 100% capacity. So even though we are being encouraged to have, and we do have, something like 105-110% domestic enrollment, every student we take in we lose money on, so it is a structural Catch 22 that we have not quite figured our way out of yet.
- We continue to have a fairly robust online presence. I do not have data for this year, but in 2024-25 we offered 23 sections online, and that is probably going to be consistent.

- This year, our number of program students took a little bit of a hit, continuing a downward trend from 2021-22 when we had a high of 157 majors. This past year, we had 128. However, our Honors Program continues to thrive. We have a robust group of honor students every year, which is great to see.
- We do have some new courses coming in the pipeline, which include iterations of our very popular history, 100-level courses. The most recent one is the Secrets of World War Two, which is very popular with students. And we also have our very first special topics course on the history of 20th century popular music.
- Our EPAC, our External Program Advisory Committee, which all of the departments are supposed to have at UFV, continues to be a very lively element of our academic community, and we are very pleased that we have two new members from the post-secondary partners that we have, or others in the sector, Sarah Ann Knutson from UBC, and Alex Grammatikos from Langara.
- We are obviously all in a tumultuous time. However, at UFV, it is somewhat acute in that we are looking to restructure, not merge with others, but restructure internally. So we do not know what that is going to look like, but there is a very likely scenario where the College of Arts will be restructured to be all schools and no departments, and we would be partnered with another department. We are not sure what that is going to be. It is looking like it might be Philosophy. All this is going to take place in the next six months, and I will obviously report next year as to what the results of that restructuring are.

Whitney Wood. Vancouver Island University:

- 2025-2026 was a time of continuing administrative and budget uncertainty at VIU, like at many institutions.
- Our leadership remains in transition. We continue to have an interim provost, Claire Grogan, who is the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, in the provost role for this year and next year, and an interim president as well.
- Layoffs at VIU continue to be justified based on the language of financial exigency. VIU recently reported, though, they finished the 2025-2026, fiscal year with a small surplus, projecting a balanced budget for next year, resulting in an atmosphere of very tempered optimism.
- We are undergoing an internal faculty restructure that is working its way through governance: The Faculty of Arts and Humanities is merging with the Faculty of Social Sciences to make a broader Faculty of Arts. It's unclear what impact this is going to have on individual department structures, and we will report back on any potential department mergers next year.
- At the departmental level, our chair, Katherine Rollwagen is currently the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. John Hinde is continuing as acting chair for 2026-2027, and Joanna Pearce (Canadian history) is continuing on a limited term contract for an additional year.
- The Department had strong fill rates for 2025-2026. Two faculty members are returning from maternity and parental leave, so we're offering slightly more sections in the coming year, but hoping that strong fill rates continue.

Dana Wessel Lightfoot, University of Northern British Columbia:

- Department doing well with 3 new hires in the last 5 years and all retirements replaced.

- Roster of regular sessional instructors to fill in gaps
- Enrolments slightly down last year related to lower numbers in spring and summer 2025 but that has rebounded for 2026
- Curriculum review in January 2026 as part of our response to External Review in 2025. 41 Senate motions as a result to revise and update titles, descriptions, and prerequisites; delete 5 courses; create 2 new ones.
- Developing new internship stream with Honours program, partnering with local organizations.
- Added new course requirement to all majors, joint majors, and Honours: UNIV 103-Introduction to Indigenous Studies, Social Sciences, and Humanities. Co-taught course with one lead instructor and 6 co-instructors. Designed to deal with issues of retention and concerns about the shift from high school to university. Course was developed as cross-program one within the Faculty of Indigenous Studies, Social Sciences, and Humanities. Taught in the fall semester by a senior faculty member.
- UNBC hosting the Graduate History conference, Shifting Tides in 2027.
- Lots of change in senior administration. Interim president. New provost, Michel Beaulieu, Historian from Lakehead. Interim Dean in our faculty. Failed Dean search last year.

Ruth Frost, UBCO:

- We have had no retirements, no layoffs in history, and no hires in 2025-26, and we do not anticipate getting any tenure-track hires in the near future.
- The department consists mostly of tenure-track and tenured members. We also have two colleagues who are lecturers, with a higher teaching load than 'research-stream' faculty members. Together the two equal 1.5 positions as one lecturer is shared with another department. One lecturer was just renewed for a 3-year term, and the other is in the middle of their term.
- We've had fairly steady enrollment with an increase in domestic students. They include a number of transfer students coming in from BC colleges, which is great to see.
- The campus is waiting for the report later this month of a working group comprised of faculty, administrators and staff appointed in Fall 2025 to look at the configuration of faculties and schools on campus. The expectation is the group will recommend that the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS, which houses History) will merge wholly or partly with the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies, which contains a lot of disciplines including English, languages, creative studies, and fine arts.
- FASS is about to have a new Dean (*pro tem*) for a year. The campus has a Provost *pro tem* as of last October.
- All told there has been and will be a lot of change and uncertainty. I think this is particularly challenging for tenure-track and contract colleagues.
- We have a lot of HIST courses going through our Senate matching the specialties of history colleagues hired in the last five years, and that is exciting.

Eryk Martin, KPU:

- Filling in for Maddie Knickerbocker, who is chair and also sits on articulation.
- KPU has been in the news for not good reasons lately, with layoffs, a lot of them taking place in the context of Business.
- History has not had any layoffs. Fortunate retirements have taken place just at the right time to absorb some of that. The administration has reduced our base sections below our faculty

commitments, which is very stressful. The only reason why that has not translated into layoffs is because we have been successful in getting Ed leaves - two year-long Ed leaves in a row. This is not a sustainable model, particularly when Ed leaves at KPU, like a lot of other institutions, are not guaranteed based on FTE, but rather are a competition. This puts a lot of stress on faculty who apply for Ed leaves, but that is going to be the strategy moving forward to keep people from getting a layoff notice.

- There has been a lot of turnover in the administration at KPU. Alan Davis, the longtime president, retired. He was replaced by Bruce Choi, who was in position of president for a short period of time, and now no longer is; we do not really know why. The provost at KPU is now filling in as an interim President while we run a search for a new president. So a lot of flux at the administration level across these institutions, similar to what others have said.
- Enrollments are doing quite well. So it seems like history is being asked to absorb the pain that is being felt more broadly across the institution.
- We will not be getting any new positions for the folks who have retired. Tracey Kinney retired a couple of years ago. We were hoping that would result in a replacement. That has not been the case. Bob Fuhr might be retiring soon in the in the near future, but we do not expect a replacement for that. We are not allowed to hire contract workers even when we have sections that are available at full, which is particularly frustrating for us.
- Nevertheless, our majors program is growing. It is at 58 students, which is the highest it has been in quite some time. And the other average fill rates are about 90%, so things are a little odd now at KPU.
- The other thing that is new and exciting for us is that we are moving forward with plans for an online minor. It is not a new minor, it is just being able to do the minor that we have in an online capacity. Regular faculty members teach about 25% online, and so we already have a lot of capacity for working towards the minor. It is really about ensuring that we are offering enough third and fourth year courses online. Typically, the online courses are the first-year survey courses. So as long as we can make sure that we have a regular rotation of third and fourth year courses, then the online minor should work and go forward, and it will be a big enrollment boost for us, because those online courses are really saving us in a lot of ways.

Rob-Roy Douglas, Northern Lights College:

- We started out potentially badly when we were told we had been dropped from eight sections of history down to two. However, our domestic enrollments have been quite robust and growing rapidly. International enrollments have not actually dropped much. The college was forced to increase the number of sections. We are back to running an online history course in the intercession to capture all of the students who need history courses. All of them are full. There have been no problems with enrollments.
- We continue to face similar budgetary pressures. Administratively, our dean retired quite suddenly and unexpectedly in February, and the interim dean is also the Vice President Academic. She has said she is sympathetic to the need to diversify history offerings, which have been stagnant at pre-Confederation and post-Confederation Canadian history for years now, but her first priority is to diversify the English program, because she is a former English professor.
- We are seeing much more growth and diversification in social sciences - programs such as Psychology. History is lagging behind right now, but we have hopes that we will increase and improve if, of course, the fiscal issues that are confronting everyone finally start to abate. We have had no layoffs, but are not hiring sessionals any more. Hugh and myself teach part time in history program and part time in other programs.

Chris Clarkson, Okanagan College:

- Faculty and Delivery Method Changes
 - The department lost three of its five members at the end of the 2024-25 academic year: a term contract was not renewed, a member transferred to Teaching and Learning, and a member was laid off.
 - In 2025-26, the number of sections offered by the department dropped from 36 to 13.
 - To cover the four campuses, we began to offer hybrid and video-conferenced courses. Per-section enrollments increased.
 - In February 2026, another department member received notification of potential layoff.
- Layoffs Reversed by Arbitration
 - In March 2026, an arbitrator ruled that faculty layoffs in 2025 violated the OCFA collective agreement. In History, one notification of potential layoff was rescinded and one member is to be reinstated.
 - The teaching workloads of the two affected History department members will not be restored. The department will offer five sections in 2026-27 and faculty members will be assigned alternate work to fill out their workloads.
 - Serving four campuses with five sections will be difficult.
- Required Courses
 - We are working to add required history courses to other programs.
 - Two programs undergoing review, Human Service Work and the Applied B.A. in Community Research and Evaluation, are considering adoption of “Caring, Curing and Confinement in Canada” as a required course.
 - A course on the history of food and wine may be developed for the college’s programs in food, wine, and tourism.
- Online Courses Final Examination Policy
 - In-person final exams can no longer be required for online courses [note: implementation of this policy has since been deferred, and in-person final exams will be permitted in online courses for the 2026-27 academic year].
- Questions
 - How do other institutions deal with online courses and examinations?
 - Are other departments developing alternatives to term papers to deal with A.I. use?

Robynne Healey, Trinity Western University:

- Decline in international students has affected the university budget overall, despite the fact that the history program does not usually get many international students. The impact of the decline in the overall budget, however, has been a number of terminations at the university generally.

History was not affected directly because our long term sessional professor, Steve Hicks, who has been at Trinity for 36 years between part time and sessional work, is retiring.

- I'm beginning phased retirement next year, which will leave then two full time faculty members.
- We have a part-timer, Dr. Sydney Harker, who will be teaching for us next year again while she is completing a postdoc at Waterloo.
- We have a number of cross listed courses that are cross listed, political studies and history. Dr. Leanne Smythe, a political scientist, does the courses like American politics and Canadian politics. All of that is to say we will be pushing for a hire for next year.
- Our enrollments in our intro courses remain good, but it has been really challenging to fill the upper-level courses, which makes it difficult to offer the program easily.
- Would like clarification from others attending here about prerequisites for upper-level courses. Some of the programs at Trinity just require students to have third or fourth year standing to take upper-level courses for history. History currently requires six semester hours or at least two introductory courses in history before students are admitted to senior level courses. What do other programs in BC do?

Chris Morier, Camosun College:

- Camosun is dealing with a lot of the same issues that we have been hearing about so far this morning. We have a new residence building in the offing. This is kind of a new chapter for our little college. I have been here for 20 years and talks of a residence have been in the air for 20 years, and it looks like it is finally happening: over 400 new beds for students in a city which really, really needs some more affordable residences for young people.
- As far as our History Department goes here at Camosun, there are two of us, Christian Lieb and myself, who are holding the line. We have a third historian here who is at 50%, Steve Fielding, but he is teaching religion classes, and despite the fact that he won awards for his PhD dissertation, it does not look like he is going to have much opportunity to teach history here at the college, at least in the in the medium term.
- We have undergoing a second round of layoffs in two years at Camosun, and so far, the two historians myself and Christian have managed to avoid layoffs. It has been hard to see colleagues in other departments, in other parts of the college be treated the way that they have been treated. Our student services have been cut.
- There is hardly any term work at the college here anymore So Christian and I are able to offer 16 sections of history per year. We try to avoid repeats or repeat sections as much as we can, because we would like to offer as much variety as we can, to keep students around for two years. However, that raises workload issues when you are dealing with four preps for four classes each term, it definitely adds up.
- Our history numbers are holding pretty strong, as far as our students go. Fill rates are over 90%, although that could partially be because we were offering the maximum amount of classes we can offer with two people. So the sections that we do offer seem to be strongly supported. Domestic students are up a little bit. We are trying to keep them around for two years and maybe send a couple of dozen off to UVic every term, after they have exhausted their history options down at the College.
- We are finishing our first full year in the School of Arts and Access. Like what some have mentioned, we are already undergoing a process of amalgamation and consolidation. Our Arts and Science school no longer exists here at Camosun, so we are finishing our first year in Arts and Access, dealing with a new dean, and so far so good for the first year. Our department chair has been floating some ideas, and it has been nice to not hear automatic nos. The common response nowadays is: "It is not likely, but we will listen," which is an improvement on where things have been.

- Looking forward to hearing more about everyone's experiences in regard to AI and assignments. A part of the problem with our tuition bands here at the college is that even though we have an uptick in domestic students, we have limits on how much we can charge for our classes. So sometimes having more students in the seats does not necessarily translate into, more revenue generation for the college.
- We are very curious to hear about this disappeared provincial review of post secondary education in British Columbia that seemed to grab a lot of headlines six months and now has just vanished off our radar screens. I do not know if that is going to offer any solace for any of us here, but I guess time to tell on that.

Michel Ducharme, UBCV:

At UBC, we had no hiring and no retirements over the last 12 months. Enrollments are robust. We taught 6600 students over the last 12 months, a significant increase as compared to the past two years. As before, most of our students are not history majors; as of late April, we had 278 majors, 26 honors students and 80 minors, which is more or less the same as last year.

To boost enrolments, we continue to raise caps and to see where enrollments land before settling on TA support. We have asked all faculty to grade or mark somewhat higher numbers without TAs, moved more 400 level lecture courses to the 300 level, to make them appear more accessible to students, and promoted thematic courses. Overall, we are more strategic about what courses we offer, when we offer them, and what we are no longer regularly offering. While these processes have required effort, our rising enrollments have insulated us to some degree from a somewhat rockier financial picture for UBC.

The honors program had 26 students this year, of whom 17 received funding to travel to archives for their thesis work, thanks to the support of an anonymous donor. 13 students completed their honours thesis in April. At the PhD level, there are currently 20 students, with two new incoming PhD students who will join us in the fall. At the MA level, there are currently 28 students, along with 11 new incoming students who will arrive in September. 12 history MAs and one PhD were completed the past year. 17 of our students participated in the Shifting Tides conference. We have made one major change to our MA program after consultation with our graduate students, adding an oral thesis defense.

Eliza McClenagan, Coquitlam College:

- We are facing a lot of the same challenges as many other institutions. Lower student enrollment has resulted in faculty layoffs.
- These issues affect history as well, and we are not able to offer the same variety of history courses as we have in the past. We also are not able to offer as many sections and have lower student enrollment in our history courses, particularly the first-year history courses.

Ryan Blaak, North Island College:

- History has been reduced from 1.5 full-time equivalent positions to 1.0 FTE, shared between two faculty members. As a result, course offerings have become more limited, requiring strategic scheduling and less frequent rotation of some courses.
- Despite these challenges, enrollment remains strong, with history courses approximately 90% full.
- NIC continues to face broader institutional challenges related to budget reductions and declining international student enrollment, particularly within Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Domestic enrollment, however, has remained solid.

- History is situated within a larger Humanities and Social Sciences department and contributes to multiple areas, including the Associate of Arts degree, university transfer pathways, the Criminology diploma program.
- The college's new student residence has created opportunities to attract students from across Vancouver Island and British Columbia, though occupancy has not yet reached capacity.
- Ongoing discussions are taking place regarding the future of the Associate of Arts degree and potential new programming opportunities. Challenges include limitations on developing new courses while being encouraged to create new credentials and program offerings.
- Institutional conversations have increasingly focused on strengthening first-year offerings and transfer pathways, reflecting current resource constraints.
- No further reductions to History are expected for the coming year.

Lindsay Hutchison, BCSSTA:

- Given that I am a high school teacher, my report will look slightly different. I will talk a little bit about some general trends, what we are seeing, and then some of the outreach we are working on. We still have many senior social studies electives. Most larger schools are offering between five and eight different courses.
- The healthiest of those courses seems to be the indigenous graduation requirement courses. All students need to take four credits of an indigenous grad credit before they graduate. In the social studies department, that would be either BC First Peoples 12 or Indigenous Studies 12. The more popular one is the BC First Peoples course; other senior electives seem to be slightly less healthy at this point. There seems to be a disconnect between the enjoyment that students are getting out of taking the class and a perception that there are just no jobs linked to the discipline.
- Unfortunately, many of the larger school districts are also impacted by new immigration requirements. For example, my school has will be losing about 100 students next year, and that obviously trickles down into senior socials electives. In terms of skills, students seem to be coming in with less and less background knowledge, study skills, literacy skills, so there is a push towards going back to basics for things like that. There is also a bit of a push and pull between students knowing they need these skills, and the skills not always being overly fun or enjoyable.
- We are also struggling with AI in the classrooms. There does not seem to be a coordinated plan across the province on how to tackle this. Some districts are mandating all students take AI modules. Other districts are tinkering around a little bit more in terms of outreach.
- We had a very successful fall conference in October. Our theme was Canadian Affairs, and it drew over 450 attendees between our two tracks, both in person and online. We had a keynote lecture by Andrew Coyne.
- We are currently working on our Developing Minds Conference, which will be on May 15, at SFU Burnaby. This is a joint partnership with the SFU Department of Philosophy and the Global Civic Policy Society. Our theme is critical discourse in AI in secondary and post-secondary classrooms. If you are interested in this, we would invite you to join us. It will be an exciting day with lots of roundtable presentations and discussions, a speaker series and a public salon. And then we are also working towards our fall conference on October 23, 2026, where our theme will be BC Affairs.
- My colleague, Chris Moon, reached out via email a couple of weeks ago, looking for some suggestions on engaging lecturers. We are still looking compiling a list. So if anybody can recommend anybody that is able to speak on BC history or BC issues, please shoot me a chat message. It would be much appreciated. We are happy to cover a speaker's fee, travel and accommodation.

Martin Bunton, UVIC:

- I have been the chair of the History Department at UVic for a year. We also have a new undergrad coordinator, Sarah Beam, who followed on from Kristen Simmons.
- Our enrollments have continued to be relatively high. We are not quite sure why, but we are doing our best to respond to those demands. This means raising caps on certain popular courses at UVic. We have a very small number of sessionals, but they bear a disproportionate load when we raise caps. And we are aware of these inequities. We are thinking about different strategies of how we can improve this situation.
- About five years ago, we engaged in curriculum changes that brought two mandatory courses to our program at the 100 and the 200 level. Still not quite sure how this structure has impacted enrollments. One thought behind this was the idea of building cohorts, groups of people who could have reason to work together as they went through the program, and we do have a very well organized and supportive undergraduate student body.
- In terms of change, the university has suggested that it will be leaning towards counting majors now, rather than students in seats. So this is a strategy that we are going to have to respond to, and perhaps these mandatory courses will help that in terms of students declaring majors earlier.
- One of the biggest challenges of these mandatory courses has been to build robust enough pools of instructors to teach these courses, to ensure that they are offered in the most accessible ways. We do not have a strong record here of the chair telling instructors what to teach, and so we are reliant on instructors stepping forward to offer to teach these courses so that they do not become bottlenecks for student progress as they go through. What is really helped us here is that we have had some recent new faculty additions, and these new faculty additions have stepped in to build up these pools of instructors for 100 and 200 in addition to other mandatory courses that we have at the 400 level, the honors level and at the end at the grad program too. So we are excited with these new faculty additions. And of course, the other big challenge which we are all facing is rethinking assignments with AI in mind.

Tina Block, TRU:

- We have five full-time faculty members in History. We have no sessionals, as we have difficulty attracting them.
- No new courses introduced this past year, and our enrollments in history remained steady, almost exactly the same as the year before, but it's the first time in a while that we had all five of our faculty members present (nobody on sabbatical/leave).
- A couple of our courses ended up being very low enrolled – they were cancelled and the instructors had to teach English composition courses instead.
- We have 11 self-paced online History courses run through TRU open learning. TRU is in the process of moving away from these two distinct pathways, and toward a more flexible learning model with about eight distinct modes of teaching (from asynchronous online all the way to face-to-face, in person).
- We've had a number of changes in senior administration – a new president started last July, and a new provost a few months ago. Along with new senior administrators have come some new directions in strategic planning, including a push for TRU to become a leader in AI.
- TRU faced many of the same budget concerns as others – many layoffs among staff and administration. No layoffs of tenure/tenure-track faculty, but many sessional and limited-

term contract faculty have lost their positions. There was a big push on early retirement, which many faculty members took.

Hugh Gordon, NLC:

- I am one of the two historians from NLC there. I also teach in Politics and Indigenous Studies when available, and I am happy to be part of the committee once again.

Marc Cels, Athabasca University:

- AU is a publicly funded post-secondary institution in Alberta. Thank you for including us in the BC History articulation meetings. And really, congratulations on your collaboration. It is really great. This is my last time attending these meetings. I am moving on to other another role.
- just over 55 years AU has offered open distance education, starting back in the 70s, with mail out, correspondence courses, and today, of course, we are all online. Our undergraduate courses are asynchronous, self-paced, and have rolling enrollment so students can start the first of any month. We do not have semesters. We do not have classes. Final Exams are invigilated online by Proctoru and professors work from homes across Alberta and beyond. I am in Edmonton, while about half our students are visiting from other universities across Canada and beyond, and they transfer credits to their home institution and program.
- Students have become more important since Covid as online education and degrees have become more mainstream. We have agreements with various institutions for granting credit. I do not have data on how many history credits are transferred from AU to BC institutions, or which BC institutions are our top senders, or vice versa. How many AU students are transferring courses from BC is something that would need to be researched. Most of our students are mature and work; we do not have a significant number of foreign students unless they are already at another Canadian institution.
- For 10 years, there have been predictions about drastically declining numbers of visiting students as other universities increase their online courses, and as the population of young people declines in Canada; however, the decline has never hit as expected, and everyone's stopped making predictions. Provincial funding, which is about 30% of our budget, remains stable. The university continues to replace and hire professors, and our faculty association won a cost of living increase this year. We are still not permitted to develop new courses, though our Dean finds ways to bend that rule and finds work-arounds.
- AU has an undergraduate history program offering a four-year major, a minor, and a three-year concentration. We have no graduate program, but there is an MA in Interdisciplinary Studies, which has a historical stream. We also offer courses in Heritage Resource Management and are up to about 44 history courses right now. Our strengths are in Canadian history and European history, with a growing number of courses on African and Middle Eastern history among our senior courses. Interest in ancient history remains strong as it always has, though a new course on the Holocaust is also popular. We had 1938 course enrollments in history last year.
- Last year we had five full time faculty and one half time. The half timer has been bumped up to full time status. Like elsewhere we have had an incredible multiplication of administrators at the university, but some of them take a golden parachute, and we have a couple former presidents and vice presidents who have come down and are teaching history for us now. So we have a sort of a little ecology going there
- As with everyone else generative AI is disrupting education at the University because our courses are not live, because self-paced courses must be produced entirely in advance before they open up to students, and because our faculty members have a somewhat heavy load of courses. Experimentation and nimble adaptation is particularly difficult at our institution. We are

still really at the stage of detecting and punishing the use of AI for plagiarism, and like the rest of the discipline, we need to reevaluate the value, the goals and the methods of teaching history, and to what extent we would include AI in our research and in our student assignments and in our teaching. And although many students have no qualms about cheating in order to obtain their credit, many other students still want to learn history, and that remains very heartening.

Matthew Barager, College of New Caledonia:

- At the College of New Caledonia, in December, they announced that they are laying off the entire full-time faculty for the Humanities, so geography, history, political science, subjects like that. This is a bit strange, given that attendance rates for history have nearly been full; every class has been full. Meanwhile they are hiring more administrators.
- History at CNC is in an unpredictable state at the moment. They are currently undergoing the process of mitigation. Rumour has it that there may be an attempt to merge some of the humanities, with faculty roles being combined into a single position. So, you may have a instructor teaching political science, history and then maybe geography.
- At the moment, the current plan is just to see how many students enroll next year, and then will just use part time sessionals to fill in. So in terms of history at the college, here it is not looking particularly good, but it will exist in some way or another.

Niall Christie, Langara College:

- Another difficult year at Langara. Further layoffs of faculty and lower-level administrative staff. The upper administration is continuing to expand despite budget deficits.
- Within history, two full-time faculty members received layoff notices, and their jobs have ended as of the start of May. Now down from pre-crisis total of 48 base budget sections of history to 28, for three full-time and one half-time faculty members.
- One anticipated retirement of a full-timer. Whether or not we will be able to retain those sections is a concern.
- One of the faculty members who was cut was Dale Montgomery, coordinator of history. That role is being taken over by Sean Maschmann.
- Similar cuts are taking place across most of the college.
- Last October, the faculty at Langara passed 92% vote of no confidence in the college president. Despite that, the College Board of Governors decided to retain her in her position after conducting a review.
- Enrollments at Langara are not great. International enrollments have plummeted. Domestic enrollments also dropped, but have been recovering a bit.
- The administration has abandoned a plan to restructure the college, likely in anticipation of the publication of the government review of higher education. There are rumors floating around that Langara will be getting merged with Vancouver Community College, but they are nothing more than speculation at this point.

5. Discussion Arising from Institutional Reports

Niall Christie, Langara:

- We had two very specific questions, one about prerequisites, and one that was about dealing with online courses and AI and similar issues.

- Also noticed themes around restructuring, restructuring of programs, restructuring of departments, restructuring at the institutional level, as well as institutions try to adapt to the current reality.
- Also cuts of faculty, cuts of courses, and cuts in particular that seem nonsensical, when we see classes where they are full and yet the sections are still being cut. We've had some difficulties at Langara occasionally with courses that have had, if not full, at least an adequate number of students to run. And yet they've been cut nonetheless, because the Dean decided that 20-25 wasn't enough to run a course with a cap of 35, which means alienating significant numbers of students.

Prerequisites:

Dana Wessell Lightfoot, UNBC:

- Removed all prerequisites in third-year courses. Just need upper-division standing (60 SCH) to enroll
- Has led to increased enrolment: e.g. of summer course History of Fashion which has 35 students and had to increase the cap twice. Last year ran a 3rd year course in summer with specific HIST prerequisites and enrollment was only 15.

Adrianna Bakos, UFV:

- We do something similar. We found that this roadblock to upper level was really reducing upper-level enrollments. As early as 2014 and 2015 we got rid of all kind of course specific prereqs and went to either 45 credits of lower-level university level credit, or nine credits of lower level history. So you could do either/or so that means three courses at the lower level, as our course credits are three. So you had to have either three units of history or 45 overall.
- This did open up our classes. Our third year classes are full. The problem is that with fewer program students, the expectations for how students are acting in those classes, how much they can get out of it, what prior knowledge they bring, makes it very uneven, and that is the challenge that we are facing now. Fourth year is not affected, because you have to have some third-year history before you get into fourth year, but not to get into those third-year classes, which are also kind of thematic and so of interest to people who want history.
- The unintended consequence is that it has been more challenging to pitch those courses in a way where they satisfy the rigour for history program students, but yet do not overwhelm those students who are coming in with little to no historical skills background.
- We are still in the planning phases for third and fourth year, but what we have proposed is having just third-year courses requiring a prereq with one first-year course, either Canadian or Indigenous. Not all departments are doing that. Some just want to have third-year standing. For history faculty, we really want to ground our students, especially international students, if we have any in the future, and set Canadian and Indigenous content before.

Cedric Bolz, Douglas College:

- In our merged Department of History and Political Science we do still have prereqs at all levels. So for second year, you have to have a first-year course. For third you have to have a second-year one. We only have one 4th year course, which is a Holocaust course, and you would have to have, in theory, a third-year course, but we have this permission by instructor scheme whereby you just essentially ask the Instructor for permission or get recommendations from a colleague on a student if they do not have the prerequisite.

- I just finished teaching one of the third-year classes, which is a course on World War II. I had a very difficult time getting students to submit their major research papers. The course was capped at 25. I had 23 in class, and I think only 12 students made it across the line. So something is amiss in terms of giving them the skill set to take on that third-year level. It was the first time I was really discouraged in over 20 years to think that maybe the third year is a bridge too far at Douglas right now, that we are not preparing them to take on those courses.
- So again, our enrollments are low. Admin has been concerned about the new sections at 300 level that we plan or are trying to implement. The enrollment cap has been raised to 35 students instead of 25 students. So we are reluctant, in a way, to offer more third year courses, because we really liked having that 25 seat cap. But everything that has been moving forward now has been with a cap increased to 35 students. So support using prereqs still, but I am not sure about the chances of keeping them in place, because I just see it at the third year level, similar to with the Holocaust Course.

Niall Christie, Langara:

- Also seeing students having difficulty completing work on time.
- Have our recent students been through a different learning experience from normal in high school because of Covid?
- Is Lindsay able to comment on the experience of teachers, especially during Covid?

Lindsay Hutchison, BCSSTA:

- It was indeed traumatic. Trends with students that we are seeing since Covid are attendance related and difficulties handing things in on time. There are large conversations that are happening, particularly after the news that came out of Ontario last week; discussions of tying grades to attendance. This seems to be something that is very desirable for many teachers in BC, but there are obviously unintended consequences of that as well. So it is a concern that stretches across the board, even going down to elementary school, and we are being told by admin that we basically have to pass the kids if they are handing in their work. All deadlines are flexible for the most part, unless you really want to fight a major battle. So it is also something that we are fighting as well.

Dana Wessell Lightfoot:

- Issue with first-year classes
- During pandemic brought in Shit-Happen clause (or Life Happens for lower level students
- 4 days extension without question. Just need to email and ask to use it.
- Lots of students do and doesn't impact grading much because half of students hand them in on time so can work on those first.

Adrianna Bakos, UFV:

- I have a upper level class, in which they establish their own deadlines. So they have a learning contract that they fill out at the very beginning of the year, and it gives them the option to choose their adventure about how they get to the learning outcomes in terms of the number of different options. But they also have to assign themselves deadlines, and those deadlines are hard and fast because they are given a week to figure out what the rest of their semester, the rest of their classes, look like, and plan to be able to finish it in the lull times during the semester when other things are not going on. For the most part, that is quite successful.

- I do also have a “stuff happens” option. But I find that in theory, most of the time it works that they understand that they have given this goal, these deadlines to themselves, and they have to be accountable for those deadlines. And I see the learning contracts, and I send them back to them with approval. And then they go forward, and while it seems that I never finish grading, it is a little bit at a time, so it is sort of manageable. You do not get that big chunk all at once. So that is another option.

Hugh Gordon, Northern Lights:

- So in some of my classes where I still have an essay and a defense, I have students set up meetings with me to defend their essays, and I tell them that for each assignment, their due date is two days before the meeting. So that gives me a maximum, sometimes, of 10 essays I have to have done per day, and therefore I can get them out in batches versus trying to do a huge number all at once, depending on how many courses I have.
- In some classes, I have shifted the essay away from a term paper to a smaller assignment, and I have created what is called a creative research project. So they have to give me an annotated bibliography. They have to do the research on a topic, but I want them to give me a piece of art on Canadian history, just as something, and I give them extra bonus points too if it is handmade, to try to reduce the amount of AI that I get. But you will get somebody who will draw me a poster and then hand me in an AI interpretation of it that talks about the ERA in Canada, which, of course, is not relevant, but at least I get them to do something.

Ryan Blaak, NIC:

- Several strategies that have improved student success and engagement, including an automatic two-day grace period on assignments and a limited number of student-managed extension tokens.
- Exploring contract grading as a future option to increase student buy in to learning.
- Face-to-face history courses have been taught using a Team-Based Learning (TBL) model for the past two years, resulting in stronger student engagement, accountability, and attendance.
- Challenges remain in ensuring students are aware of course expectations and assignment requirements.

Lindsay Hutchison, BCSSTA:

- A lot of the work at high school is happening in the classroom, so the students are less used to having dates well in advance.
- There is a lot of research coming out that says our students are not great at executive functioning at the high school level, and some of those skills that used to be taught, like how to chunk an assignment and plan for those sort of minor due dates in between, are not taught any more. So that explicit teaching part, I think, is something that we are falling down a little bit.

Rob Roy Douglas, NLC:

- Administration told me that we are no longer able to require students provide a sick note for extension; most of the students don't want to spend 12 hours in the local clinic waiting for a sick note anyway.

- I generally have a requirement that they have to let me know they need an extension, before the due date. If they need an extension they get an extension. It comes with a set new due date. And if they need another extension, that will gain another set due date.

Niall Christie, Langara:

- My late penalties are pretty draconian, but then I'm very generous with extensions to balance it out.

Online Exams and the Impact of AI:

Chris Clarkson, Okanagan College:

- I had two questions that I was interested in hearing from other departments about:
 - OC is going to require online exams in online courses. We have Respondus Monitor, which records students during exams, but we do notice differences between the results in in-person and online exams. Is having online exams in online classes the norm now? How are people handling it?
 - How are other departments handling AI use on term papers? Are other departments willing to accept alternative assignments? Based on what I've heard already, it sounds like they are, so I think this question may have already been answered and we can focus on the online exam issue.

Niall Christie, Langara:

- We can require in person exams for online courses, though, we're beginning to get some resistance from our administration.
- We are not able to use any kind of proctoring software to make sure the students are actually not cheating during exams online, which is a bit of a challenge.

Eryk Martin, KPU:

- At KPU, for online courses, it is up to faculty whether they want to do online assessments for online classes, or whether they want to do in-person exams for online classes, It is probably split 50-50, and based on preference. So a lot of people are increasingly going to in-person exams for online classes to get around or try to mitigate this issue of AI.
- For online teaching we do not do a lot of online synchronous, so it is usually, if it is online, it is asynchronous, and so usually do online asynchronous assessments; there are a lot of take-home assignments, as opposed to synchronous exams online. We do not really do that very much.
- And then in terms of willingness to do other kinds of assessments to mitigate AI, we are talking about this all the time. Creative assignments are one approach, and then one of the things that a couple faculty over the next couple of years are going to try doing is basically in-person, exit interviews with students. So a defense. Some people are calling it a conversation, or maybe an exit interview, to have a sort of oral discussion with students. That would replace some aspect, possibly a 30% final exam. We are absolutely moving towards different kinds of assessments and experimenting. We are trying anything and everything, essentially, and seeing what happens.

Chris Hyland, Alexander College:

- Alexander College prefers online exams for online courses but the technological challenges are still there. There are Respondus and Proctor programmes, but these are “speed bumps” rather than full stops when it comes to cheating, because there are ways to get around these kinds of software issues.
- At other institutions, if you have an asynchronous course, would you have an online exam, or would you still allow a face to face exam?
- If you do have an online exam, would you still accept that as transfer credit? Because there are some institutions that do not accept an online course with an online exam. Where are we as a group on those two issues?

Rob-Roy Douglas, Northern Lights:

- We require face to face exams for an online courses. And many of us do other things; I had multiple exit interviews and face-to-face exams in my online classes this past term, and the incidence of cheating in the face-to-face class was actually higher because I had face-to-face invigilators, invigilating one exam in one of the classrooms, and I am pretty sure they allowed the students to use cell phones to check the answers, as the answers were suspiciously similar and suspiciously detailed in that in one class. The other one, which I invigilated, was fine. So there are issues, but the exit interviews have worked pretty well. I will probably expand those because it is a way of determining whether the students have actually done the work of the course.
- The major challenge is time; I devoted 20 minutes each per student to exit interviews with over 70 students.

Adrianna Bakos, UFV:

- So at UFV, we also have the policy where, as long as you have indicated in the registration, you can do an in-person exam for an online course, even an asynchronous online class. And I chose to do that for mine. I will say this is because I have been teaching the same course with an online exam for a number of years now.
- I decided this year to try to do an in-person exam, and the failure rate for the final exam was abysmal. It was like they clearly had done very little work in the online environment to get to the point where they actually could answer the questions on the final. That is alarming, but also not surprising, and makes me think I want to keep the in-person exam, but I have to figure out how to get students to actually do the work, in order to prepare.
- As a matter of interest, I did have a student come to me before the final exam, and he confessed, without any prodding, all on his own, that he was cheating in my online class. When I had already looked to see what was going on, everything seemed fine. I did not detect any AI. And it turned out in the end that the student was cheating on the quizzes, and so we talked about what the penalty was going to be, etc. This is a student who wants to be a cop! I was impressed, actually, that this person actually said, I have reached a turning point in my life where I do not want to do this kind of thing, and I am just “fessing up”.
- So I was impressed with that. But then I thought, “Oh, here's an opportunity for me to gauge, how is he cheating?” So we sat down together, and I said, “Which of these quizzes are you finding it easier to cheat on than the others?” Because there were different formats for them and the person said that multiple choice is disaster if you are doing like weekly multiple choice quizzes or something like that. Those are the easiest ones to cheat on. And he said that fill in the blanks and matching questions were much more difficult. So I am assuming that what he did

was take the prompt sentence for a multiple choice, stick it into Chat GPT or a search engine, and then was able to come back with an answer and then just pick the one that looked the closest to the answer that was being provided by Google or ChatGPT. So he said that those ones were super easy to cheat on, and then these other ones were less so. So I found that quite helpful. I need to rethink about how I am going to do very small, low stakes quizzes that are supposed to keep them on track during the semester.

Cedric Bolz, Douglas College:

- We are not allowed to shift the method or the means of exam. So if it a course is online, it has to be an online exam. You cannot ask students to come in and to sit the exam at the college. I was going to maybe pose a question to SFU to see if potentially there might be a point where online courses and online exams are not going to be accredited the same way as in person exams at the big institutions?

Nicolas Kenny, SFU:

- Not a question that has come up. How about at UBC?

Michel Ducharme, UBCV:

- No discussion at UBCV about examinations for online courses. Don't think there is a policy.
- Instructors can do whatever they want.
- Leslie Paris has been looking at transfer requests from other institutions. If a course is offered by your university and there is an agreement to transfer credits, they are transferred.

Fiona MacQuarrie, BCCAT:

- Just to put in a bit of perspective from the system as a whole: This is an issue that has come up in other disciplines at previous times, even pre Covid. BCCAT, in its facilitative role, has no authority to tell institutions what to do. It is a cooperative system. We have tried to remind institutions that there are a couple of problems with policies that say no exam, no online, online exam, no transfer credit. One is that a lot of institutions offer the same course online and in person. And most institutions do not indicate on a transcript whether the course was taken online or in person.
- So a policy saying that online version of a course would not be accepted for transfer credit would be very difficult to administer in practical terms, unless the course comes from TRU online or Athabasca, where all of the courses are primarily online. So BCCAT has really tried to discourage that sort of policy. That being said, I know that at a couple of other articulation committee meetings this year, some committees have tried to pass a guideline along those lines, but in practical terms it is very difficult to administer, and that is why BCCAT tries to discourage that sort of policy.

Ruth Frost, UBCO:

- If a course is from the college level, and it has been articulated, it is not always clear if it is online, and you really have to dig down to find that sometimes. So I am interested by this discussion. Whether it will change how I look at things or not, I don't know, but so far mode of

delivery and exams has not been a problem. I articulate lots of courses from colleges, and have never felt the need to look at the method of delivery.

Cedric Bolz, Douglas College:

- We have had to have online exams for online courses. And as I teach online courses, usually two per year, I have been holding interviews similar to other discussed previously, and I have found it works fairly well. I do have to reserve 15 minutes per student at the end of the semester for it, so it does mean that what would be a three-hour exam has to be booked for nine hours. But again, it is all online, so it really does not affect room scheduling and so forth. In order to prep the students for these, there are discussion-style questions. I often have points in my classes throughout the semester where we do breakout sessions where a student is put in with three others and given some discussion questions. Everyone asks and answers one question, and they discuss them. So they get some warm up that way. So they are not going in cold to the process when it comes to the final exam.
- I've had a few students just freeze up in the moment, but really, I have about the same number that I would have in a pen and paper exam. So I found it effective, and some students said they actually like it, because there is a certain level, I guess, of camaraderie, of bonding.

Restructuring of Institutions:

Niall Christie, Langara:

- Discussion of cuts to classes is on the agenda, so can be deferred for the moment.
- Also seeing a lot of restructuring of institutions, restructuring of administrations. How is that affecting your ability to do your job? How is that affecting people?

Meghan Bowe, Columbia College:

- Ongoing restructuring has involved a significant amount of work from staff and faculty.
- One positive experience is faculty participation in new programming. We meet on campus each Wednesday to propose and develop ideas.
- As a society faculty and staff have input on our new contracts, to an extent, however with changes across the institution there are still many unknowns. Marketing and student recruitment for instance, as faculty are not directly involved.
- Faculty teaching loads for 2026-2027 are still to be determined.
- The institution will continue to offer existing first and second year courses for transfer, while offering small, specialized programming in the third and fourth year.
- The college has largely avoided layoffs so, offering early retirements and buyouts.
- Administrative changes are coming, including a new president.
- Next year will provide an opportunity to report on early outcomes of institutional restructuring.

Dana Wessell Lightfoot, UNBC:

- Provost's duties have changed to include research. Has appointed a Vice Provost Academic and then another senior admin under him to head up research.
- New provost is a historian and so far things look positive.
- Ongoing negotiations because faculty contract expired in 2025.

- Restructured 5 years ago from 2 Colleges to 5 faculties which seemed a lot given our small student body (3000 students, grad and undergrad). Restructure was fairly unpopular at first but has actually worked out well.

Adrianna Bakos, UFV:

- For us, the restructuring has come very quickly, but then there was so much pushback from faculty that they have slowed it down slightly. That has the disadvantage, I would say, that there is a lot of acrimony building in between departments that might be merged. So there is a lot of stress right now, which has really attenuated the collegiality of the college as a whole. As heads of departments relating to each other, we have usually been quite good, effective and cooperative.
- During the last two months, and for the foreseeable future, at least till December, I see a deepening level of hostility and acrimony. So there are some of us that feel that the pace of change should be quick, because what is happening is that there is this real rancor building, and so it is going to be that much more difficult to put departments together when they have gone through this period of real aggressive stances towards each other. That is the part of the uncertainty that is really corrosive, so we will see where we come out at the other end. But so far, it has not been a great process for us.
- I think what very many people fear is the loss of departmental autonomy, and we have been assured that programs will continue as they have before. If you want to be a major in History, you are a major in history. History faculty will still be in charge of curriculum development, and they will not have to consult with the other department or departments that are in their school.
- But there are concerns about what happens a year from now. Are we going to lose our ability to control our own curriculum, make our own decisions, control our own departmental budget? So these are all things really based on fear; that is what is driving this, especially for very small departments that might see themselves amalgamated with a bigger department and lose their faculty voice. If you say, have a history department of ten, and you add Poli Sci with four, how is that going to work out for the Poli Sci members? They will feel very much that they do not have a voice at the table. So it is negotiating those perceived inequities and the threat to autonomy that is driving this.

Eryk Martin, KPU:

- At KPU there was, over the last eight months, a push towards departmental mergers, and we had consultations. The deans were going to all the faculty meetings. We got to fill out forms. We got to pick our friends and other departments, and say who we did not want to be with, these sorts of things. And so that was all going full steam ahead, and then it just has stopped. And so what is interesting is trying to understand why that has now suddenly just sort of disappeared.
- It could be related to the faculty saying, like, "Are you sure you want to be doing making these decisions now, when we do not know what is happening at the provincial level"? Maybe that idea got through. The admin has not really said: they have gone quiet and dark on it. It could be this whole thing with the university president falling apart, and maybe it is just being paused, and they will return to it more seriously.
- Faculty's approach to that restructuring, of course, has been very diverse. There is a lot of exactly what Adrianna said - fear - particularly among smaller departments who fear losing control or an identity. They have maintained that programs will stay intact. But if your program, if your curriculum rep is not from your department, and they are in charge of your program changes, then you start to fear that they do not really understand your side of the department. And are you going to be treated in the same way? And so on and so forth.

- Lots of faculty realize the potential of merging in a good way. But the thing that is driving a lot of faculty anger and alienation is generally trying to understand what the motivation is for it. And this has shifted. So there are shifting motivations and explanations from the admin as to why they are doing these things, and when the when the explanation seems to change, then that creates this sense of distrust among faculty members.

Ruth Frost, UBCO:

- We have similar things. So these sort of shifting motivations that Eryk was just talking about, we have had similar at UBC. When the idea of a working group just looking at the faculties and schools in general, of which there are seven, it seemed to be pitched in terms of budget and then we were told in Senate, at least, that everything was on the table. There were no preconceived notions.
- And those of us who were in a faculty that was likely to merge with another faculty were skeptical at best, and that has been sort of proven true. So there has been a real lack of transparency. It means that you have to talk with your colleagues, but none of us know what we are talking about, and everybody is worried.

Whitney Wood, VIU:

- A lot of similar experiences to what Eryk and Ruth have mentioned. Quite a healthy department. We have seven members at the moment, so any merger that we would have would be with a smaller department or program. So we think we're in a good position to continue to bring our program forward and make sure our needs are met at the curricular level.
- I think there is generally a positive reaction to the idea of faculty restructuring at VIU, we're proposing a move from eight faculties to four, and this merger with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences makes a lot of sense. It's being well received, where we might have a bit of pause is the idea of what impact this is going to have on course offerings. How we see this being pitched is a streamlining of undergraduate methodology offerings, primarily in the social sciences, so when students are taking a statistics course or something like that.
- There is a continued need to kind of clearly articulate the value of history courses, and particularly courses in historical methodology. So we're inward looking in terms of how are we articulating our learning objectives and ensuring that history courses remain on the books as something that is unique and required.

Cedric Bolz, Douglas College:

- When I became chair four years ago, I hit the ground running, while there was a forced merger of Political Science with History, It was the first thing that I had to deal with. And it was quite challenging. There was no justification given from admin why the merger needed to move ahead at that time. Maybe they felt that one chair could do work of two, potentially, in terms of running both departments, and that was going to be me.
- So when the merger did unfold, similar to what you mentioned, we had a strong history department with eight regular faculty back then, and four political scientists. One then retired, but all of the political scientists were very senior faculty at Douglas. So was I, but it was very difficult. It almost seemed to be a person to person process, re- establishing some sort of collegial bond with them and me. Because I did not want to burn any bridges. I tried to put out any potential fires that might emerge, because we also had some very strong personalities that have been there a very long time in history.

- So to cut a long story short, one of the reasons that was given by management was that it was a strength in numbers game for us as a newly merged department; we now had essentially 12 regular faculty, and maybe that was going to be a benefit to us long term. We still have. We have our contract faculty at Douglas, who can still accrue seniority by section, and I think we are one of the few institutions that has that. So you can build up your portfolio as contract faculty and then be in line once regular positions do come up.
- I have been having a difficult time trying to convince both departments that some historians or political scientists, especially new political scientists with PhDs, can flex in terms of what they are able to teach. In other words, they can pivot, and for new faculty coming in with this horrific job market, we have had a hard time with Political Science trying to explain that certain instructors could potentially teach first-year POLI, and POLI instructors could potentially teach first-year history, but some individuals feel strongly that political science and history are too different. I think, especially with the first-year courses in a merged department, that fluidity of instruction needs to be kept in mind, just for job preservation of new individuals trying to get regular work, that they can flex across both faculties and that it is now political science and history.

Niall Christie, Langara:

- Speaking of instructors who flex. Rob- Roy, would you like to tell us about everything you've taught at NLC?

Rob-Roy Douglas, Northern Lights:

- History, Political Science, First Nation Studies, Computer Science, Statistics, Philosophy.

Robynne Healey, TWU:

- How does that work with your program reviews. What do your reviewers say?

Cedric Bolz, Douglas College:

- Speaking to that only from a Douglas College experience, not only did I have a merged department on my plate as first thing, but also we had a review of the History Department every five years and an external review. The college only dealt with the History Department review, and Poli never received a review. And the argument then from Poli became: we no longer exist as an independent department. Why should we be subjected to a review? So History did and it took about three years, and Poli was exempt because they argued, we know we no longer exist as an independent department. How can you review us?
- So they have never had a review of Political Science. Moving forward, probably in the next three years there will probably be a combined review of Poli and History as one entity.

Dana Wessell Lightfoot, UNBC:

- Department teaches a lot of cross-listed courses, especially with women's and gender studies and global and international studies.
- WGS going through an external review and I met with the reviewers as chair because we have a joint program. WGS reviewers liked the cross-listed courses because expanded options for their students.
- Occasionally cross-list courses with Political Science as well

- Program does have a requirement that any courses taught in History must be taught with someone who has at least an MA in History.
- Currently faculty member in First Nations studies with a PhD in History who is on sabbatical next year. We have delisted his courses as crossed with HIST because FNST cannot guarantee someone with a HIST MA will be teaching them.

Rob-Roy Douglas, NLC:

- Our program reviews are credential specific, not discipline specific, so they'll be focused on Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Arts in psychology, and any courses that contribute to those degrees will be included in the program review and the instructors as well.

Eryk Martin KPU:

- I did not do program review, but I was chair when it happened. And we have a lot of classes cross-listed with Asian Studies. There was nothing bad that came out of program review that was tied to the cross-listed courses, or interdisciplinary connections between history and Asian Studies. It was only mentioned as a good thing.
- For the most part, it was irrelevant, and not really discussed, but in the context of the layoffs, one of the layoff mitigation mechanisms at KPU was to look for potentially laid-off faculty to have work in other departments, and then their ability to get work in other departments would often come down to this a minimum qualification certification. So in order to be an instructor in history, you need to have at a minimum x sort of credentials. And each department can make that more open or more closed.
- In History you need to have a history PhD, preferred, or in a relevant discipline. So there are different forms of language that you can use to protect the department to a certain degree, so that you do not have someone from Business saying, "I took a world history class in undergrad, so I can teach your history courses." So you can keep those sorts of things out while also opening the door in a more flexible, useful way when it is justified. So I would really encourage people to have a look at those minimum qualifications. And at least at KPU, you could change those.

Niall Christie, Langara:

- At Langara, one of the mitigation strategies for layoffs has again been to look for work for the person in question in another department, if they are qualified to do it. They will do qualification interviews in order to establish whether or not someone's suitable. Has not happened a lot.

6. BCCAT JAM

Niall Christie, Langara:

- The BCCAT Joint Articulation Meeting took place last November. The sessions are on the BCCAT YouTube channels.

7. Update from BCCAT

Fiona McQuarrie, BCCAT:

- Special Projects officer at BCCAT, and we at BCCAT realize that pretty much everyone who serves on an articulation committee is a volunteer, on top of all the other things that you do at your institutions. So thank you for making the time to attend, because articulation committees are kind of one of the most central parts of the BC transfer system, and we really appreciate everybody making the effort to participate, and particularly to the chairs and the meeting hosts, because that's an extra level of work on top of it.
- Rob Fleming, our executive director for the past 15 years, retired in December, and Mike Winseman, who is formerly the director of transfer and technology at BCCAT, has been appointed interim director for the next year. Mike's job used to cover two functional areas, so now those areas have been separated out again.
- Jennifer Cook is the interim director of technology, and our new interim director of transfer and articulation is Fred Jacklin from VIU. He retired two years ago as registrar, and saw the job posting, and thought it looked interesting, and so now we have him for a year.
- The other staff member in the transfer and articulation area, who some of you may have interacted with is Anna Bella Chun, and her time right now is being divided between supporting the articulation committees and working on the technical side of the house. Technically, it's 50/50, but right now it's more like 90% articulation, 10% tech.
- We also have two new members of the transfer and articulation Committee, which is the standing committee of the BCCAT council that supports the articulation committees, among other things. And one of them is Rob Roy Douglas. The other is Vance Mattson from College of the Rockies, and they were just appointed in the springtime.
- The dates for this year's JAM are November 5th-6th, completely online. In previous years, we have had an in-person component, but with cutbacks and layoffs and restructuring and all those sorts of things that at the institutions throughout the system, it becomes a little harder to justify an in-person session at a downtown Vancouver hotel, even though we know from what the feedback we get that people really appreciate the in-person option, just for networking and meeting other people at other institutions do the same job. But we decided that this year it is going to be all online. The good thing, though, about it being online is it's completely free to register. Theme TBA. Registration will open in late summer, early fall, and we will send out notifications when it is available, and we will have a draft agenda by then. Last year, for the first time ever, we actually had to close online registration because we reached the maximum number the platform could support. So if you are interested in attending, please register as soon as you can. We may be able to add more virtual seats if the demand is there, but we do not want to have to cut off registration like we had to last year.
- System news: We were just talking about the post-secondary review. BCCAT was not formally invited to make a submission, but we did anyway. We talked about the importance of BCCAT to supporting the BC post-secondary system and offering options for students that they might not have access to in other jurisdictions. We also pointed out that BCCAT, in one way or another, collects system wide data about transfer activity, and could make that available to make informed decisions about any changes to the system that we have been proposed. We were not in a direct meeting with Don Avison, the commissioner who is conducting the review, but we did see some of the submissions that other institutions and organizations made, mostly because they posted them publicly as well as making them, and we were really pleased to see that a lot of them mentioned the importance of BCCAT and the significant role that it plays in supporting post-secondary options in BC. The deadline was extended for the review; it was supposed to be March 15. We understand probably third or fourth-handedly that it has actually has been submitted, but we have seen no indication of when or where the outcomes of the review will be released, or what they are going to look like. The one thing that we have been told, I would say, probably informally, is that the review is to make recommendations, and whether the government decides to act on those recommendations or not, is a whole other matter. I think

some of the people in this room were around for campus 2020. It is the same thing. The commissioner is going to make their recommendations, and then it is up to the government as to whether they want to do anything with any of those recommendations, in light of the cutbacks and closures and layoffs that have been discussed here and also are being discussed at other articulation committees.

- At BCCAT, we have received more than the usual amount of questions this year about our institutions being required to fund in-person travel to articulation. And the official position that BCCAT and the ministry take on this is that the funding for in person travel is included in funding that is given to all public, post-secondary institutions. The second question that we get is, “How much is it?” And the answer to that, honestly, is that we do not know. It is just that when the ministry calculates the amount of funding that goes to the public post-secondaries, there is an allocation rolled into that for in-person travel to articulation. It is not a separate line item or anything like that, as far as far as we are led to understand. If anyone needs written confirmation of this, I would direct you to page 19 of the Articulation Committee Guide, which is posted on the BCCAT website, and the statement is laid out there in writing if anyone needs to refer to it.
- If anyone has been told explicitly by an administrator that funding is not available or will not be provided, we are asking the representatives to please let BCCAT know; you can email me, or you can email Fred Jacklin. And in the past, this has been really useful information for us to take forward, either to the individual institutions to remind them of the obligation that goes along with their base funding, but it also really helps us if we decide that it might strategically be worthwhile to approach the ministry with this. The more actual evidence we have that these denials are happening despite the funding being made available, and the more evidence we have to show that this is happening across institutions, is extremely helpful to us, so if anyone knows of such denial or has received an explicit statement of denial, and this also includes encouraging representatives to use other sources, like their own professional development money to travel to articulation, please let BCCAT know, so that we can build a picture of how widespread this practice is and take it forward.
- Technology news: Thompson Rivers University, for the past couple of years, has been working on an initiative called the BC Credit Bank, which would be a repository for primarily micro-credentials, and having that as a location for students who have those acquired the credits to be able to use them for transfer credit elsewhere. Part of this initiative that has been developed in the past year or so is that BCCAT is going to try develop an AI-based application that would evaluate non-credit micro-credentials and try to identify academic credit transfer opportunities for those. Again, this would just be to review the transcripts from the non-credit micro-credentials and identify opportunities, but it would still be up to the institutions to establish the transfer articulation agreements that would make the transfers possible. But the plan is to see if AI can facilitate this kind of work.
- And along similar lines, BCCAT is also looking at the possibility of using AI to as a component in the transfer credit system. This is the platform that underlies the BC transfer guide, and it is the network through which institutions exchange articulation requests and decisions. And BCCAT is going to try to see if there is a possible role for AI in there, and possibly doing some of the more routine comparisons, such as level study, number of credit hours, number of contact hours, to see if that would speed up the process of submitting and evaluating transfer credit requests.
- Last bit of news I have is around articles and thoughts every year after the articulation meetings. BCCAT has an ongoing database which records attendance at the meetings. One motivation is for internal BCCAT research, so if we are asked a question, which is a question we are also often asked quite regularly, does attendance at meetings vary if the meeting is in the Lower Mainland or outside the Lower Mainland? So we can use that database to run that question and see if there is a difference. The short answer is no, there usually is not a difference, because the

costs for representatives outside the Lower Mainland to come to Vancouver is then paralleled by the cost for Lower Mainland representatives to go outside the Lower Mainland. So it seems to make no difference. But we have that data set that we can use to answer questions like that. The other is that the Degree Assessment Board sometimes will ask for a record of attendance by an institution or a group of institutions when it is evaluating a program proposal from the institution, to see if the institution is indeed participating in the articulation committees that are relevant to the program. The issue that we have been encountering at BCCAT, though, is that tracking attendance is more and more of a challenge because different committees use different formats to list attendance. Some list it separately, some just put attendance in the heading of each institutional report. So what we are trying this year is a standardized attendance and reporting sheet to see. I am very strongly encouraging the committees to use this standardized sheet for entering that information. So the minute-taker at each meeting is being asked to fill out and submit the sheet. Please make sure that your name and your institutional affiliation are recorded on the sheet so that we can track it.

- The other bit of articulation committee news is that every year, BCCAT offers a fund to support research by articulation committees into transfer and articulated-related issues. This is the fund that used to support the flexible pre-majors and developing those and that program is no longer is operational. So now the mandate of the fund has been expanded to support research by committees in anything that is an issue in that particular discipline, or in transferring in that discipline, and to try to support research to address that issue. Just to give you an example, the most recent project that this fund supported was a project by the English as an Additional Language articulation committee, where they revised their provincial-level learning outcomes to align with the Canadian language benchmarks, which is a federal system of judging English language proficiency for academic study, among other things. Formerly, the amount of this fund was \$15,000, which was roughly equivalent to a course release at an institution for an instructor. But we were getting more and more proposals with multiple participants, and that did not really cover one. Course release was not sufficient to do the work. So starting in this fiscal year, the funding for this project is now \$25,000, up from \$15,000. We have not had any applications for the last two years. I think this is partly because of all the stuff that is going on at the institutions. And this is one more thing that people may not have time for. But if this committee is interested and has a project in mind, we really encourage you to apply. We would love to give this money away. The information and the forms are on the BCCAT website. The one thing that we do ask to save your time and to save ours is to come and ask BCCAT before you go into the work of creating a proposal, so that we can tell you if it is in line with the mandate of the fund, or we can help you shape the proposal so that it is in the line of the mandate of the fund. There is no application deadline. It is first come, first served. So I leave that with you to think about.

Tina Block, TRU:

A few years ago, we did actually do a project. Marcel Dirk from College of the Rockies did a project on a flexible pre-major, and whether or not that was an option for us, and we decided it was not, in the end, but it was an interesting investigation nonetheless. So we have a history of having done these sorts of things before.

Adrianna Bakos, UFV:

Is there a way to apply for inclusion in the TRU micro-credential credit bank, because some of us have done micro-credentials that may fall under the radar? We did one on digital storytelling at UFV, and we did not get very much institutional support, so we ran it as a micro-credential through our department, but it was very uncertified in some ways. We have all the documentation for the requirements. But is

there a way to put that on somebody's desk and draw it to their attention, because I do not know whether it would actually be picked up by whatever AI you are using to mine for these possibilities.

Fiona MacQuarrie, BCCAT:

TRU is a leader on this project, and I can probably find out the contact person at TRU that you could get in touch with. We are mostly in it to help with the provincial scope of the project, but they are the ones that are doing the actual leg work on it, and I'll send that to you.

8. Discussion of Excel Spreadsheet

Niall Christie, Langara:

- Members of the committee reported having trouble using the spreadsheet this year. How widespread was this, and are there changes that we need to make to that spreadsheet? Is there anything we need to do in terms of the way that we collect data?

Suggestions:

- Use of Simple Survey for collecting the answers, then the Secretary can compile them.
- Google docs or MS Forms.
- Adding a form to capture losses to the departments over the year – retirements exist, but layoffs etc. do not.

9. Impact of Institutional Cuts on Maintaining Programmes

Niall Christie, Langara:

- At Langara at times the administration has refused to backfill sections when faculty get release (e.g. to do union work). This has made it difficult to maintain range of course offerings. How have others managed in the face of course cancellations and/or refusal to backfill?

Rob-Roy Douglas (NLC):

- Pointed out that Union release is paid by the Union and something the union should take up with the institution. It should not be paying for backfill if it is not happening.

Adrianna Bakos, UFV:

- Reduction from 78 to 65 sections. Massive waitlists. Admin response is that students can go take less popular courses elsewhere in UFV. Does not work for students who need specific history courses or discipline-specific courses to graduate.
- Strategic Enrolment Policy requires planning a year in advance. But waitlists have to be addressed now, or there could be consequences further down the road if students cannot get the courses they need. The admin response is that students will have less course choice. Which was largely not the situation for most in the past.

Cedric Bolz, Douglas College:

- Admin is cancelling courses by mid-July for September. Too early to know full enrolments. Alternative is guided study courses, maximum enrolments 6 students. Very cheap to run, flexible. Can even be used to deliver advanced material.

Adrianna Bakos, UFV:

- Caps on third year courses raised from 30 to 36. Fourth year stuck at 20 as seminar courses. Admin cancelling classes if they do not reach close to cap, or even forecast enrolments. Raised caps are a problem there.
- Also, some programs see enrolments peak at different time. But cancellation decisions are made by Assoc. Deans, who may not be aware of that or try to enforce a uniform policy for all courses.

Chris Clarkson, Okanagan College:

- Administrators are risk averse and public perception is important to them. Our administrators have said that it is better to put on too few sections and add more if demand materializes, than to cancel underfilled ones. They don't like having to address the public reaction to cancellations.
- International enrolment in sections has been impacted. Typically, OC limits the number of international students per section with course enrolment quotas. This year the administration removed the quotas for History courses the same week that registration opened and the classes filled with international students. That's problematic, because departments with large numbers of international student registrations have been targeted for cuts on the basis that they're likely to face the steepest declines in enrolment.
- The administration has explained that they expect Arts to be a high-enrolment portfolio that will subsidize programs with higher operating costs (such as trades and technology programs).

Niall Christie, Langara:

- A concern is how long the turnaround will be on current austerity.

Rob-Roy Douglas, NLC:

- Program cuts started 15 years ago at NLC. History collapsed down to basically two courses (pre- and post-Confederation Canadian). Recovery can take a very long time.

10. Election of new Chair and Secretary of HAC

Rob-Roy Douglas, NLC acclaimed (reluctantly) as Chair.

Hugh Gordon, NLC acclaimed (suspiciously) as Secretary.

Location of next year's meeting undetermined. Traditionally held in conjunction with BC Studies Conference. That is not determined yet.

The date of the 2027 History Articulation Committee meeting will be Monday, May 3rd, location TBA.

11. Motions of Thanks

Thanks were expressed to the current Chair and Secretary for their services, and to SFU for hosting the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 1405.