From:

Diane Salter, Vice Provost of Teaching and Learning

Re: Feedback on the Report from Dr. Tony Bates on the Future of Learning Technologies at KPU

I would like to thank all of those who contributed their time to the interviews with Dr. Tony Bates and for your in depth and open responses to his questions. Based on Tony's report, it is clear that we have a lot of work to do as we move forward to enhance our capacity and pedagogically sound use of technology.   I have prepared a summary of Tony's report, followed by suggestions on how we may move forward in a positive way at KPU.   The report identified a number of major concerns and barriers to the use of technology for teaching and learning. KPU now needs to move quickly to address the concerns. The good news from Tony's report is that many at KPU are ready for this move in the context of our Vision 2018 goal to be widely recognized for teaching and scholarship and the provision of exceptional student learning experiences.

Thank you again for your input into the consultation process and for your continued support as together we take the next steps forward

Diane Salter, Vice Provost Teaching and Learning.

Background to the report:

At the request of the President, during April and May of 2013, Dr. Tony Bates conducted interviews with the KPU community to assess the current role that technology is playing in teaching and learning at KPU and to subsequently prepare a report for the Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning. The goal was to help us develop a plan for moving forward with pedagogically sound use of technology at KPU to enhance teaching and learning.

His consultations included meeting with, and receiving written comments from 29 faculty as well as:

- The President, Provost and Deputy Provost

- Vice Provost Teaching and Learning
- AVP's from Administration/Finance, and Research
- 5 Deans and 6 Associates Deans
- The Registrar, the University Librarian, and the CIO
- The Chair of the Senate Sub-Committee on Academic Planning and Priorities
- President of the KFA
- Director of Institutional Analysis and Planning
- Manager, Learning Technologies

Tony identified a number of barriers to the greater use of technologies to support teaching and learning including:

1. The current teaching culture at KPU

Most faculty at KPU see the small classroom lecture as being the mode of teaching that leads to the highest quality of learning. In their view, any use of technology must then enhance rather than replace this mode of teaching. For learning technologies to be more widely accepted at KPU, the use of technology must be directly linked to reform of the curriculum and changes in teaching methods and delivery.

2. Teaching has not been viewed as a dynamic profession

Currently, faculty feel that until now the university has not cared about their professional development as teachers, and this lack of professional development at KPU has been a major barrier to greater use of learning technologies.

3. A fixation on the high school leaver/young, full-time students

Lifelong learning and flexible learning has not been recognized by KPU faculty as a potential area of need for future course development. The fixation has been on students leaving high school. Without an acceptance of the importance of non-traditional markets for KPU, there is no rationale for most faculty to move to alternative delivery methods, such as hybrid or online learning.

4. Lack of institutional leadership in use of technology for teaching and learning

There is a belief that a clear and consistent direction and a commonly shared vision related to teaching and learning with technology has been lacking among the senior administration.

5. Lack of faculty engagement in strategic thinking about teaching and learning

There has been no culture of collegial faculty engagement in discussing potential markets for programs, needs assessment, appropriate learning outcomes and appropriate teaching methods, which are fundamental to ensuring appropriate use of learning technologies.

6. Need of support for faculty in matters related to Teaching and Learning

In the past KPU has provided various supports for teaching and learning including opportunities for faculty to participate in Instructional Skills Workshops and a Provincial Instructors' Diploma Program. The Centre for Academic growth existed for a number of years and was disbanded in September of 2012. Consistent with KPU's strategic plan, there is now a need to articulate and share KPU's vision for teaching and learning. There is increasing interest and need to incorporate technology to enhance student learning and provide additional learning opportunities. Strategies to link pedagogy with technology innovation are required as well as provision of technical support to help faculty with online and blended course development.

7. Lack of resources

Substantial investment is needed, both in terms of physical infrastructure (in particular in terms of providing a modern classroom experience) and in investment in people and jobs that do not exist yet.

Conclusion

There are strong barriers in place at the moment to the greater use of learning technologies. These barriers are as much cultural as organizational or financial. The good

news is that as far as learning technologies and flexible learning are concerned, KPU is almost a 'green field site'. It should be possible to build strong foundations and avoid some of the more costly mistakes made elsewhere.

Based on the report are the following recommendations:

1. Focus on the teaching

Faculty need to be persuaded that they will need to consider new teaching methods if they are to serve the needs of today's students. This means focusing on appropriate learning outcomes, and in particular on the development of '21st century skills' and experiential learning. Learning technologies will be an essential component of developing such skills.

2. Focus on the need to serve new markets (and new sources of revenue)

A strong case needs to be made to faculty as to why it is important to serve non-traditional markets. Learning technologies, and in particular hybrid and fully online learning, will be needed to provide many such targeted students with access to KPU's programs.

3. Engage faculty in an ongoing basis in strategic thinking about teaching methods, appropriate modes of delivery and the use of learning technologies

Engaging faculty in strategic thinking about teaching and learning needs to be an ongoing, recurrent set of activities that is deliberately planned and continuously evaluated if learning technologies are to be appropriately used.

4. Design classrooms for the 21st century

The classrooms at Kwantlen are inadequate for supporting hybrid learning (or even supporting classroom-based teaching with technology). Discussion of how class rooms could be configured to align with the Vision 2018 and teaching and learning goals and strategies should be part of the academic development planning process. A teaching and learning/academic development task force should be established to address these issues as part of the conversation on teaching and learning and faculty development needs at KPU.

5. Develop an IT plan for the whole university that includes support for teaching and learning

There is need for an IT plan for the whole university that includes support for learning technologies. KPU should establish a high level, university wide technology committee that can identify resource requirements and determine priorities for technology-related expenditure.

6. Establish a university-wide, distributed Academic Support Service

Development of, and staffing for the support centre for teaching and learning are required to support teaching and learning as well as technology innovation across KPU. A central unit with a distributed model of support within faculties is recommended.

7 Develop a financial strategy to support changes in teaching methods, and the increased use of learning technologies

More resources need to be found for the following (in order of priority, in terms of what needs to be done first with regard to learning technologies):

- the establishment of the Academic Support Service
- resources to provide better technical support for classroom technologies, including redesign or reinstallation of classroom equipment where necessary (dependent on the outcome of the external review of IET, and will also involve Facilities)
- a fund to stimulate innovation in teaching, learning and scholarship.