

**B.C. History Articulation Committee Annual Meeting**  
**Monday, May 8, 2006**  
**Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops**

**Present:** Marcel Dirk (College of the Rockies, Chair); Elmiro Argento (Douglas College); Niall Christie (Corpus Christi College); George Davison (College of New Caledonia); Karen Ferguson (Simon Fraser University); Bob Fuhr and Tracey Kinney (Kwantlen University College); Anne Gagnon (Thompson Rivers University); Gordon Hak (Malaspina University-College); Towser Jones (Capilano College); Marjory Lang (Langara College); Jamie Morton (North Island College); Sylvie Murray (University College of the Fraser Valley); Ben Nilson (University of British Columbia Okanagan); Mia Reimers (Northwest Community College); Eva St. Jean (Northern Lights College); Duff Sutherland (Selkirk College); Jonathan Swainger (University of Northern British Columbia); Christopher Friedrichs (University of British Columbia Vancouver, Secretary).

**Regrets:** Clarence Bolt (Camosun College); Thomas Saunders (University of Victoria).

**1. Call to Order and Introductions**

After opening the proceedings with an informal get-acquainted exercise, the Chair called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m.

**2. Welcome**

Anne Gagnon of Thompson Rivers University welcomed the participants to the TRU campus.

**3. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was adopted as amended (Moved: G. Davison; seconded: T. Jones).

**4. Adoption of the Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the 2005 meeting, which had been circulated previously, were adopted (Moved: N. Christie; seconded: G. Hak).

**5. Old Business**

**(A) History Articulation Committee Listserv**

Niall Christie, the History Articulation Listserv manager, circulated a list of addresses for corrections and reminded members of the correct procedures for communicating with each other through the listserv.

## **(B) History Articulation Committee Website**

Tracey Kinney reported that after some months of negotiation, the administration of Kwantlen University College had agreed to have the History Articulation Committee Website hosted at the Kwantlen History Department website. Tracey will act as the webmistress for the site. This will be an open access website. Once items have been added to the site, they will be visible to anyone who accesses the site.

There was a brief demonstration of how the site can be accessed once it is activated.

There was some discussion of what should be included on the site. A consensus was reached that the site should include (but not necessarily be limited to) the following:

- Minutes of past articulation committee meetings (to the extent available).
- An archive of past announcements circulated to committee members.
- Reports pertinent to the business of the History articulation committee.
- A list of current articulation committee members with their names, institutional affiliations and e-mail addresses; members who do not wish to have their e-mail addresses listed may request that this information be omitted.

## **6. New Business**

### **(A) Institutional Reports from Individual Departments**

Each participant delivered a brief oral report on the major developments at his or her institution. Participants were reminded of the previously adopted decision that each oral report should be limited to 5 minutes, and the Chair enforced this limit with admirable firmness.

#### **1) Selkirk College (Duff Sutherland)**

Enrollments in History are dropping slightly. An on-line version of the college's First Nations History course is being developed. Community outreach initiatives are being planned.

#### **2) Kwantlen University College (Bob Fuhr and Tracey Kinney)**

Kwantlen has established a B.A. program. A minor in History has been established and has proven very popular with students. A major in History has not yet been authorized. Enrollments in lower-division history are down somewhat. Offerings in Asian history are being expanded.

### **3) Thompson Rivers University (Anne Gagnon)**

The transition from University College of the Cariboo to Thompson Rivers University has involved numerous changes, many of which have been initiated from above without very much consultation. Teaching loads have been reduced from 3-3 to 3-2, but funding for new hirings has not been forthcoming. This has resulted in structural difficulties. Although TRU now administers the Open Learning program for British Columbia, TRU students themselves are not signing up for many open learning courses.

### **4) Capilano College (Towser Jones)**

Enrollments are declining in many Arts subjects, including history. The History Department has instituted a new course in World Civilizations and is developing a new course in Latin American history. The department is involved in some community outreach programs, including substantial support for the planned Squamish Museum project.

### **5) Malaspina University-College (Gordon Hak)**

Enrollment numbers are a bit soft. Long-time department member Clarence Karr retired and a symposium was held in his honour. The department has succeeded in getting funding to fill the vacancy created by his retirement.

### **6) University of British Columbia Okanagan (Ben Nilson)**

The division of Okanagan University College into UBC-O and Okanagan College caused substantial administrative difficulties which are slowly being overcome. UBC-O does not have a History Department; instead, the historians are part of a larger department ("Unit 6") which encompasses about five disciplines. The administration has set extremely high standards for new hirings, as a result of which not all advertised positions have been filled. Enrollment targets for UBC-O have not yet been reached.

### **7) Simon Fraser University (Karen Ferguson)**

The new SFU undergraduate curriculum, which requires students to take a specified number of courses designated as meeting Writing-Intensive (W), Quantitative-Reasoning (Q), and Breadth (B) requirements, has significantly impacted History Department planning. One lower-division course in Canadian history will be restructured to enable it to be designated as a Writing-Intensive course.

This report occasioned some discussion by participants in the meeting about how SFU will assess History courses designated as (W) at other institutions for transfer credit. It was explained that SFU could accept a course for History transfer credit while making a separate determination as to whether that course can also be accepted for (W) credit at SFU.

**8) Northern Lights College (Eva St. Jean)**

Enrollments are down and the college is facing some financial difficulties. There will be increasing use of video-conferencing so that students at different campuses can take the same course simultaneously. The college is developing a two-year diploma program, but community outreach programs are not being implemented as quickly as planned.

**9) University of British Columbia Vancouver (Chris Friedrichs)**

The department has made a number of new hirings, including Professor Daniel Vickers, currently of the University of California at San Diego, who will become Head of the Department as of July 1. The department has been engaged in a long process of undergraduate curriculum reform. Changes in the structure of lower-division courses have already been adopted, while upper-division changes are still forthcoming.

**10) University College of the Fraser Valley (Sylvie Murray)**

UCFV has applied for full university status, but a decision has not yet been made. Meanwhile there are ongoing adjustments in the distribution of activities between the Abbotsford and Chilliwack campuses. Recent initiatives by the History Department include efforts to encourage more access for aboriginal students.

**11) Northwest Community College (Mia Reimers)**

Enrollments are a matter of serious concern. The Department has adopted effective strategies to counter the threat of possible faculty layoffs by adopting a well-received long-term plan and by intensifying community outreach efforts.

**12) Corpus Christi College (Niall Christie)**

Enrollments are rising. The faculty includes a number of people who are teaching on a contract basis. The college will seek authorization to offer an Associate degree. Many Corpus Christi students are successfully transferring to UBC and other universities where they often become History majors.

**13) Langara College (Marjory Lang)**

The composition of the History faculty has remained stable for many years, with no recent retirements or new hirings. Enrollments are somewhat down, especially in Canadian history. The History Department is involved in some successful community outreach activities, such as the Langara Lecture series.

**14) University of Northern British Columbia (Jonathan Swainger)**

Enrollments are rising, but even so there is concern about the administration wanting to reduce the number of faculty positions in History. New courses such as one on “War,

Terrorism and Society” may be useful in sustaining the number of history enrollments. But lack of support from the administration may require the department to reduce its delivery of courses to the outlying campuses of UNBC.

### **15) College of New Caledonia (George Davison)**

CNC has experienced a significant number of faculty layoffs. Enrollments have been in decline ever since UNBC was established. The Department’s initiatives in the areas of community outreach and student recruitment have not received sufficient support from the college administration.

### **16) Douglas College (Elmiro Argento)**

Enrollments have shown a slight decline. New courses are being developed, such as a course on War and Society. Third-year courses will be developed as service courses for certain four-year programs offered by Douglas College. The Educational Leave program for faculty members has been phased out and will be only partly replaced by a “scholarly activity” fund to support research by faculty members.

### **17) North Island College (Jamie Morton)**

Enrollments in history are up, but only at the college’s main campus in Courtenay, not at the Port Alberni campus. The college focuses strongly on pre-professional programs such as nursing, so that humanities courses typically get lower priority in terms of funding and scheduling. High-powered enrollment-enhancement strategies have not yet yielded noticeable results.

### **18) College of the Rockies (Marcel Dirk)**

Concerns about potential declines in enrollments are linked to the larger issue of demographic outflows from small rural communities. Since COTR is a multi-campus institution, more courses will be taught simultaneously by use of streaming videos.

At the conclusion of the individual oral reports, there was some general discussion of the quality of current History students. A number of participants reported that they increasingly seem to have very strong students and very weak students, while the middle range of “B” students seems to be declining in number. There was some discussion of the issue of student motivation.

## **Lunch Break**

### **(B) Consolidated Institutional Reports**

Chris Friedrichs reported on the consolidated Excel spreadsheet which summarizes statistical information from the different departments, a first draft of which had been previously circulated to all participants by e-mail attachment. Some difficulties had

arisen both with regard to input, since not all participants were able to provide data in an identical format, and with regard to output, since not all participants have the same browsers or the same version of the Excel program. Most of the difficulties seem to involve use of the Comment function.

After some discussion it was moved by S. Murray and seconded by B. Fuhr that next year the Excel spreadsheet should be used only for strictly numerical data, while additional comments should be provided in a separate document. The motion was approved.

Accordingly, as of next year the numerical data provided by representatives will be consolidated into a single Excel spreadsheet while the narrative comments provided by representatives will be consolidated into a single Word document. An asterisk can be included in each cell of the spreadsheet for which additional comments are provided in the Word document. Both the spreadsheet and the narrative document will be posted on the new History Articulation website.

### **(C) Chair's Report**

Marcel Dirk reported on the B.C.-wide meeting of Articulation Chairs and Co-Chairs hosted by the British Columbia Council on Articulation and Transfer (BCCAT) in February 2006. Marcel Dirk and Chris Friedrichs represented the History Articulation Committee at this meeting.

- (1) BCCAT invited discussion of best and worst practices of articulation committees. Best practices include effective networking among members of the discipline./ Worst practices include poorly planned or unfocused meetings.
- (2) BCCAT encourages articulation committees to take advantage of technological possibilities, e.g. by establishing articulation committee webpages.
- (3) BCCAT is increasingly concerned with the issue of articulation between public and private post-secondary institutions. Generally the government want to encourage flexible articulation between public and private institutions.
- (4) BCCAT is concerned about how to manage articulation issues for the increasing number of students in the Lower Mainland who "swirl" from one institution to another while accumulating enough credits for the B.A. In general the government wants to assist such students in the pursuit of their education.
- (5) Most participants in the conference seemed reluctant to support radical changes in the articulation system.
- (6) BCCAT recognizes that at a time when overall post-secondary enrollments in British Columbia are not expected to rise there will be increasing competition for students among post-secondary institutions.

The chair's report was followed by some discussion of the various issues arising from the report. Participants were concerned about the way in which students – especially “non-traditional” students – will increasingly take a “marketplace” approach to accumulating credits from various institutions to meet their degree requirements. There was also discussion of the extent to which on-line courses will or should compete with classroom teaching. It was suggested that the demand for web-based courses and distance education may actually be lower than some educational planners believe. Finally, the decision of the government to accept all Athabasca University courses for B.C. transfer credit was discussed and its implications considered.

#### **(4) Prior Learning Assessment Recognition**

Chris Friedrichs (UBC) raised the question of the extent to which students who receive transfer credit for courses given at colleges or university colleges have received credit for those courses on the basis of Prior Learning Assessment Recognition. Participants in the meeting indicated that the number of students who apply for and receive PLAR in History is very small. It was agreed on all sides that in the rare cases when a student applies for PLAR for History credit, such credit must be based on a comprehensive assessment of the student's demonstrated capacity to meet all course objectives, which would normally include writing and research skills in addition to a final examination.

#### **7. Election of History Articulation Committee Chair and Co-Chair for 2006-2007**

In accordance with past practice, this year's co-chair/secretary, Chris Friedrichs (UBC), was chosen by acclamation to serve as chair of the articulation committee for 2006-2007.

There was then some discussion of the selection of the co-chair/secretary for next year.

Tracey Kinney and Bob Fuhr (Kwantlen University College) agreed to serve as joint co-chairs/secretaries for 2006-2007, with the understanding that one of them, prospectively Bob Fuhr, would then serve as chair in 2007-2008.

#### **8. Date and Place of the 2007 Meeting**

Sylvie Murray confirmed her previous invitation to have the University College of the Fraser Valley host the 2007 meeting. The committee gratefully accepted this offer.

Members of the committee then voted to hold the meeting at the time of the B.C. Studies conference, which is scheduled to take place in Harrison Hot Springs, April 27-29, 2007.

With respect to whether to hold the meeting on the Friday before or the Monday after the B.C. Studies conference, members of the committee voiced a decisive preference for the latter. Accordingly, the next meeting of the History Articulation Committee has been scheduled to take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on **Monday, April 30, 2007**, on the campus of the University College of the Fraser Valley.

## **9. Motions of Thanks**

Marcel Dirk moved to thank to Anne Gagnon for making the arrangements to host this year's meeting of the History Articulation Committee at Thompson Rivers University.

Duff Sutherland moved to thank Marcel Dirk for his work as chair of the articulation committee.

Both motions were unanimously adopted.

## **10. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was adopted at 2:50 p.m.