

University Leadership Team Retreat

August 26-27, 2010

STRATEGIC TEACHING AND LEARNING PLAN

Background:

Last spring, the newly formed University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) agreed upon the need for a strategic plan specifically devoted to issues of teaching and learning at the U of R. This plan will emphasize the high priority we place on teaching on our campus by serving as a parallel document to the Strategic Research Plan, and will help to fulfill the following recommendations from the institutional Strategic Plan:

- A1—Promote and reward the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, and public service. Make the University widely known for excellence in all its activities.
- A6—Take a programmatic approach to distributed teaching and learning.
- B2—Make the transition into university seamless; enhance accessibility and flexibility; expand early-awareness and transitional programming; and ensure that appropriate supports are in place for students with special needs.
- B5—On a foundation of positive and open employee relations, provide freedom and opportunity for faculty and staff to excel, be esteemed, and be recognized.
- C1—Raise the profile and increase the presence of the University regionally, nationally, and internationally. Promote community involvement of University personnel by redoubling our efforts to showcase the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, and administration.

Process and time-lines:

The UCTL members agreed that they would lead the creation of the plan themselves, rather than forming a subcommittee or separate committee. The Committee also agreed to the following process:

- 1) **Research and gap analysis**—The Committee began by doing some research on existing teaching and learning plans at other institutions. Our next step is to consider the unit-level plans submitted at the end of April in order to discern what initiatives related to teaching and learning are already underway or being planned in academic units, and to identify commonalities and gaps. In addition, we will consult other existing institutional documents that relate to teaching and learning, such as the Distance Education Task Force, the Reading and Writing Task Force, the Strategic Enrollment Management

Report, etc.

- 2) **Consultations with stakeholders**—Beginning in the early September 2010, committee members will hold consultations with both internal stakeholders (such as the Students' Union, Deans and Associate Deans, Federated Colleges, Faculty Councils, etc.) and external stakeholders (such as school visions, Aboriginal community groups, Regional College representatives, etc.). We will also hold a town hall on campus to solicit feedback from a wider audience. Our goal is to conclude consultations by December 2010.
- 3) **Writing and approval of the plan**—Over the course of January and February 2011, the Committee will discuss the research and consultation input, and will create a first draft of a plan, to be presented for discussion at Deans' Council in March. By June 2011, we hope to present the plan for information to Executive of Council and Senate.
- 4) **Implementation**—The report will include a phased implementation plan, with short-term and long-term objectives to be met over a five-year period. The implementation of the recommendations will be led by the UCTL in collaboration with academic and student leaders across the campus.

Key issues:

While many issues will undoubtedly arise throughout the research and consultation phases, we anticipate the following will be key categories for our discussions:

- 1) Evaluation of teaching
- 2) Recognition of teaching (awards, performance review, etc.)
- 3) Technology and teaching
- 4) Support, development and training of teachers
- 5) Assessment of student outcomes
- 6) Diversification of teaching and learning (international, Aboriginal, students with disabilities, bilingual education, etc.)
- 7) Effective transitions for students
- 8) Rethinking and innovating

Feedback and suggestions from ULT members on the proposed process and goals for this strategic planning exercise are welcome at the retreat discussion or afterwards.

--prepared by Vi Maeers and Lynn Wells