

Alternative Staffing Approaches for Scalable Distance Education: The Open Learning Perspective

Dr. Valerie Peachey

Thompson Rivers University Open Learning



Where We're Going Today

Context

Approaches

Lessons Learned

What's Next



Mission Program Delivery

We are a team of professionals working collaboratively to facilitate positive experiences for TRU-OL students, Open Learning Faculty Members and the TRU Community.



Context

- ✓ Government mandate “Open Access”
- ✓ Moderately sized : ~25K enrolments, 240 OLFRMs, 1,200 exams per month, 500 plus courses
- ✓ Demographics – mature students, women, mid-career
- ✓ High service expectations



Approaches

Faculty Development

Sustaining Viability & Cost Efficiencies

Governance & Stakeholder Relations



Faculty Development: Building Confidence and Capacity



Viability & Cost Efficiencies

- ✓ Pay for performance
- ✓ Pay per student
- ✓ Two faculty per course
- ✓ Scalable



Governance & Stakeholder Relations

- ✓ Collaborative and consultative: \$ driven by gov't
- ✓ 3 Collective Agreements
- ✓ Operational Committees



Lessons Learned

Technical

Administrative

Resource

Student
Engagement



Lessons Learned

Technical

- ✓ Infrastructure
- ✓ Trends
- ✓ Flexibility through payment system



Lessons Learned

Administrative

- ✓ Knowledge of vision, mission and goals
- ✓ Strong training and integration
- ✓ Constant communication
- ✓ E-Learning Facilitator



Lessons Learned

Resources

- ✓ Senior staff as mentors
- ✓ Pay for results
- ✓ Maximize performance



Lessons Learned

Student Engagement

- ✓ Create clear expectations with students and faculty
- ✓ Ensure online/technical capability and support
- ✓ Develop frequent communication, address concerns



What's Next

- ✓ Greater automation
- ✓ Periodic review of mission/vision
- ✓ Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater
- ✓ Incentive for use of social network by OLFMs
- ✓ Take risks, work out of the box





“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail”

Ralph Waldo Emerson



