

Speaking Points for Dr. Moura Quayle
Deputy Minister of Advanced Education

Higher Learning Symposium

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Check against delivery

Introduction

- Thank you.
- Looking across the room, there are so many leaders in B.C.'s advanced education community here. I would like to thank all of you for taking the time to come today.
- And I recognize that some of these leaders will potentially going in and out of the room as the B.C. labour frenzy continues. We all hope for positive conclusions!
- As you know, I'm "making the rounds" to campuses across the province – 17 so far. The Minister and I have a competition going about who will finish them all first. I think he is winning!
- These visits help me to understand the challenges you face – and to appreciate the people, the systems and learning environments in your worlds.
- They also let me see firsthand the unique strengths of every one of your institutions, and the results of the excellent work you're doing to support our students and our province's economy.
- Today I'd like to share with you:
 - a bit about my background – always important to understand the lens through which people view the world – followed by
 - some thoughts about the "big picture" trends and challenges facing higher education.
 - I then want to focus on some of the things we are doing well in the B.C. system, and
 - on some questions that I am pondering about how we should move forward.

- Finally, I'd like to talk about some of the Ministry transformations that are going on and that I hope will positively affect the relationship between the Ministry and the system as a whole.
- The Minister of Advanced Education, the Honourable Murray Coell, will be joining us later in the day to speak more about the ministry's priorities for the coming year – but just to do a quick preview – they are:
 - Strategic Investment plan – revising it and making it work for us.
 - Research, Technology and Innovation
 - Student Financial Assistance – improving, enhancing and being eternally creative.
 - Quality. Quality. Quality.
 - Life-long learning, Adult Literacy, Adult Basic Education.
 - Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education – recent Forum – moving from talk to action

MQ Background

- First of all, I want to thank all of you for making my “entry” into the Deputy position most enjoyable.
- It's exciting to see the people, building and systems at work, but also the big-picture of our post-secondary institutions working in collaboration to provide the best possible education for students, and the most effective ways to pursue our research mandate.
- And it's rewarding to work – directly and indirectly – with all of the dedicated people in this room as partners in serving British Columbia's students, British Columbia's economy, and British Columbia's communities.
- My background is as a planner and designer in both government and private practice. Having always wanted to teach, my graduate work focused on researching professional educational models and eventually took me to UBC as a Professor of Architecture and Landscape Architecture.
- But I've always been interested in “the next layer up” – as a Program Director, I liked the Faculty issues, as a Dean I liked the University issues and – yes – as a Deputy I like the cross-Ministry issues. As a designer – context is critical. So I carry that with me.
- And just so you know – my passion is definitely the public realm – everything we do as citizens together – and especially the processes that we engage in to make things happen. Therefore some of my most proud accomplishments are physical ones – something with a product.

- In my discipline, this means things like the Vancouver greenway system, which I contributed to through my work on the City's Urban Landscape Task Force way back in 1992. But it is because of this work that people on foot and bicycles can safely cross Granville and other main arteries without risking death by traffic.
- Accomplishing things motivates me and gives me pleasure – so this sense permeates what I'd like us to achieve together over the next little while.
- And my other “passion” is teaching. I haven't entirely forgotten the challenges of teaching in an institute of higher learning ...
- ... the endless meetings working towards consensus ... the pressure to publish ... and in the past few years, the accountability factor of websites like Rate-My-Professors-dot-com.
- With over four million entries critiquing faculty at over 5,000 institutions – including almost ALL of ours – the website reflects the changing reality of post-secondary education today...
- ... and one of our real challenges into the future – facilitating life-long learning.

The big picture – a new competitive environment

- So what is the reality we face globally, nationally and provincially?
- I've recently read two books that paint a picture of the rapidly changing environment – “The Future of Higher Education” by Newman, Couturier and Scurry – and Harold Shapiro's “A Larger Sense of Purpose: Higher Education and Society.”
- One of the themes is the student-as-consumer. There is a new marketplace environment that is seeing competition intensify dramatically among post-secondary institutions.
- Institutions compete for prestige, for research dollars and for students.
- One clear indication is the growth in advertising by post-secondary institutions around the world – from direct mail to glitzy websites to phone recruiting to expanding budgets for print and electronic ads.
- Italian universities, for instance, increased spending on advertising from \$500,000 in 1999 to \$5 million four years later.
- Australia has earmarked as much as \$35 million over four years to attract international students.

- By comparison, our province has only just started down this road – when a full-page newspaper ad placed by UBCO can still create controversy!
- Another troubling tactic noted in my recent readings is the shifting emphasis of financial aid – from awards based on need, to those based on merit. As usual, we need a balance.
- Think about all of the leaders of society and industry who didn't enter university – or were late bloomers, whose real genius – and potential contributions to society – were not reflected in their high school marks.
- One of my contributions to life in the Ministry is an online subscription to the Chronicle of Higher Education. At some level, there is just TOO much information!
- But recently there was an article called “Ferment and Change: Higher Education in 2015.” Daniel Yankelovich cited five trends that we should probably pay attention to:
 - Trend 1: our aging population – anyone who has seen a presentation by David Baxter of Urban Futures is well aware of the challenges that face us on that one. And for sure we need to keep our eye on our demographics re: advanced education.
 - Trend 2: America's (replace there Canada's) growing vulnerability in science and technology – students aren't flocking to these areas. Why? I kind of like this one: School children stereotyped scientists as socially inept, eccentric and mad. This cultural stereotype needs to be demystified, and fast! They note that courses are designed to winnow people out, not draw them in. It comes back to “literacy” – we have all types and science literacy is one we ignore at our peril.
 - Trend 3: The need to understand other cultures and languages. I think we get this one – but how fast can we operationalize? Reminds me of my dad having to take Russian, German and French to complete his PhD at the University of Glasgow in the 40s.
 - Trend 4: Increasing challenges in higher education's commitment to social mobility – issues of affordability and developing new competencies – the possibilities of integrating work and higher education – internships, co-ops, and so on – “time to re-invent the relationship between high school and higher education.”
 - Trend 5: Public support for other ways of knowing – the nature of “truth” – how we arrive at it and how we recognize it. No one discipline or area has all the answers. This leads to Hannah Arendt's views that some categories of truth will not yield to scientific inquiry but must be pursued through dialogue. For sure we need to explore, recognize, respect, codify and clarify the strengths and limitations of non-scientific ways of knowing.

What are we doing well – but we can always improve upon

Co-operation and collaboration

- There's no question that competition is increasing globally – and we cannot ignore this trend.
- What I'm suggesting, however, is that we must choose – consciously and carefully – how we engage in that competition.
- I see encouraging examples of collaboration around the province ...
 - North Island College's partnership with the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design that allows students on the north Island to finish an ECI fine arts degree.
 - The Great Northern Way Campus, which brings together SFU, Emily Carr, BCIT and UBC – and now with some new funding for Digital Media Education. Hurrah!
 - Capilano and Douglas colleges' transfer agreements with the Vancouver Premier College of Hotel Management, a private college recognized around the world, and now in B.C. as well.
 - And our medical training expansion, involving UVic, UNBC and UBC.
- I am particularly impressed by what's happening in the North, where UNBC and the College of New Caledonia have used partnerships to rise to the challenges of geography and sparse populations.
- The North Cariboo Community campus in Quesnel, opened earlier this year, is just one of the recent examples of CNC and UNBC working together to offer excellent programs – sometimes under one roof, sometimes through bridging from diploma to degree programs offered at different locations.
- I have chosen several examples of collaboration that we are working on in B.C. right now: BCcampus, aboriginal post-secondary education and transferability.

Example 1: BCcampus

- BCcampus offers a model of collaborative excellence that has drawn attention from online educators around the world.
- By providing a single access point, BCcampus is giving students access to the wide variety of online learning information and resources available at all of our public institutions.
- This is a mammoth undertaking.

- BCcampus has spent the past 3 1/2 years doing the groundwork – much of it invisible to the naked eye – for the final phase of implementation.
- We expect to see students able to interact in real time through the portal and all post-secondary institutions by summer of 2007.
- Meanwhile, through the Online Program Development Fund, we're supporting new courses and programs, and tools and utilities for developers.
- Most of the projects that have been approved are collaborative, involving at least two institutions, and often outside agencies as well.
- These resources are freely available to educators at all public post-secondary institutions in B.C., and an online repository has been created for ease of access.
- I'm excited that Open School B.C. and the Alberta Online Consortium have joined BCcampus in developing this project.

Example 2: Aboriginal post-secondary

- Collaborations are also key in supporting and improving aboriginal post-secondary education – and thinking clearly about who these learners are and the support that they need.
- Our strategy, the topic of a forum last week, is going to require all of us to pitch in and to work together in perhaps different ways.
- Perhaps this is a good place to note that I chair the Deputy Ministers Committee on Social Development – and this provides us with a real opportunity to work on cross-Ministry collaborations – with all of our Ministerial partners – another example of working together.

Example 3: Transferability

- Underpinning so much of our collaborative work is our transfer system, which is another aspect of higher learning in B.C. that has drawn attention for being ahead of the pack.
- In fact, it's been recognized as one of the most extensive and sophisticated credit accumulation and transfer arrangements in the world.
- What we're pushing for now is a pan-Canadian recognition system that will acknowledge B.C. qualifications and transfer system, because the need is becoming readily apparent.
- Challenges remain, but we are working hard on maintaining and improving upon our great system.

- For instance, BCCAT is starting to include selected private post-secondary institutions.
- The expansion of the private sector is here to stay, and it's vital that we acknowledge this reality, as well as the benefits to the public system of having seats available at no cost to the public purse.
- We're moving forward slowly and carefully so that quality – and B.C.'s reputation – are protected in the process.
- For private and out-of-province degree programs, the Degree Quality Assessment Board must be satisfied before the Minister grants his consent to offer degrees.
- The board's process is recognized to be equivalent in rigour to that applied to the assessment of degrees in public institutions.
- BCCAT has adopted a policy of admitting those private degree programs to the B.C. transfer system.
- This is new, and it will be interesting to see how successfully it addresses barriers between public and private institutions at the degree level.
- Meantime, there are 200 private training institutions in B.C. accredited by the Private Career Training Institutions Agency (PCTIA).
- In many cases, their students' learning compares with that acquired in public institutions.
- And many of those students want to continue in an advanced program at a public institution, and eventually earn a degree.
- The dilemma for public institutions is that PCTIA's accreditation process is not well understood.
- Public institutions are reluctant – and rightly so – to form articulation agreements with private institutions without a commonly accepted and independent quality assessment mechanism.
- In some ways, this is the same frontier that colleges faced when they were established in the '60s and '70s.
- We have asked BCCAT to investigate and facilitate credit transfer between the two sectors, where it is appropriate and feasible.
- I know they have already begun to consult with you on this question.
- I look forward to seeing what they will recommend to start the process of building bridges for B.C. students in private institutions.

Seven Critical Questions

- Any discussion of quality related to the private post-secondary sector brings me to one of several questions I've been asking myself over the past few months.
- They do not change my heartfelt belief that British Columbia has a post-secondary education system to be proud of – and thankful for.
- But in a world changing as fast as ours is today, we cannot rest on our laurels – or we, and our students, will be left behind.
- So – here are seven critical questions that sometimes keep me awake at night!

Question 1: Quality of teaching and learning– and connection to innovation

- Do public and private institutions take enough responsibility for how much students are learning?
- Or do we assume that teaching is up to teachers, and learning is up to the students?
- To what extent are we making the mistake of equating quality teaching with comprehensive coverage of the curriculum, which are not the same things at all?
- Are we using our new knowledge about the many ways in which students learn?
 - (Didn't you just love the quote from new UBC professor Carl Wieman, Nobel Laureate Physicist, in Monday's Vancouver Sun: "I wasn't really able to do the atomic physics research at a level that I was very happy with any more. I've never wanted to be one of those doddering old scientists who are 30 years behind the times." It's the professor's fascination with teaching that is bringing him to Canada. Wahoo!
 - And then the Sun Editorial this morning focused on the importance of teaching as university's missions.
 - "Since new knowledge is often gained by reorienting how we view things, the practice of teaching can prove useful to conducting ground-breaking research.")
- Are we aligning curriculum with modes of learning, to take advantage of the gains that can be made when the two are in harmony?

- Or are we still relying too much on lectures, with little interaction – and then blaming failures on the students themselves? What about innovative pedagogy?
- How do we actually measure the learning that goes on in our institutions?
- Is it time for an exploration of the “a” word – accreditation?

Question 2: Balance – what about our reward system?

- My second line of questioning focuses on the three roles of an institution of higher learning: teaching, research, and community service.
- Universities clearly reward faculty for their research achievements.
- But do we reward them to the same degree for their teaching, or their contributions to the broader community?
- How do we strike a better balance, especially in research-intensive institutions?
- When a faculty member devotes time to a community project, how can their efforts be “peer reviewed”?
- Until this happens, our role in society will be less than it could be – and should be.
- In our colleges and university-colleges – how do we encourage excellence through meritorious performance – in teaching, research and community? We need to find ways.
- Excellence must be the watchword in everything we do – at colleges, university-colleges, universities and institutes.

Question 3: How far can we push collaboration?

- How can we make our institutions even more complementary and think about the student’s best interest?
- For example, can we use the strengths of the college system for Years 1 and 2 and then hone the entire system to actually guarantee those students the opportunity to complete their degrees?
- Is this doable?
- Can we collectively decide the research and expertise “niches” in our regions so that we don’t significantly overlap in specialized areas?

- Can we have significant regional collaborative ventures? I know the Island has one. Can we have more?

Question 4: Accountability – service plans, frameworks etc.

- What is the best way to engage ourselves in discussions of accountability?
- How do we best measure our accountabilities – and have them not just quantitative measures, but also qualitative ones?
- How do we make sure that the service plans performance measures aren't the tail wagging the dog?

Question 5: Research and Innovation – the new frontier

- What is the role of government in research and innovation?
- Who should be developing research policies? Science policy? Social science policy?
- How do we respond to the challenges mentioned in the “trends” around science and technology? How do we keep up in British Columbia? In Canada?
- How do we resolve the complexity of what I call the “innovation landscape” in B.C.? So many groups – how do we get them all working together?

Question 6: Going Global and the Gateway

- The Gateway is actually big for us in post-secondary – it's way more than transportation – it is about people.
- The Ministry is getting back into the international education business – how do we “brand” B.C. and still provide the flexibility for institutions to do their own thing?
- How can we develop an integrated approach to international education as part of gateway – recognizing international education as a significant economic sector as well as a cultural imperative in terms of building global citizenship and inter-cultural understanding?

Question 7: Responsiveness – adaptability & flexibility

- How responsive are we as a system to student program needs, and to faculty ideas?

- Do we have the capacity to change quickly and be light on our feet?
- In my experience, getting a program – or even a new course – through Senate, or Ed Council, can seem to take forever...
- ... so long, in fact, that sometimes the program is no longer needed by the time it is approved.
- I know some institutions have a fast track for pilot projects. Proposals go through Senate quickly and efficiently.
- Then, once the program is in place and appears to be a keeper, the proposal goes back for a slower, more thorough review.
- Can we streamline to be more flexible and adaptable?
- Needless to say – these are lots of questions with not many answers currently attached – but I think these are the “meat” of the dialogue that we need to have as a system over the next months.

Evolving AVED

- The last issue, responsiveness, also extends to the Ministry, and that's something we are working to change as part of Evolving AVED.
- As you know, we've been taking stock of existing conditions and future trends that affect higher education, reviewing our key values and priorities, and looking for ways to improve service and working relationships.
- I want to thank you all for your input into this process.
- Some of it was not easy to hear.
- But the most candid advice is often the most valuable, and we appreciate your honesty, even if it made us wince.
- It's helped us to come up with core values and enduring key principles of who we are, and a working framework for realigning the ministry to fit those principles.

Values



Respect: valuing and honouring co-workers
Integrity: honesty and authenticity
Balance: life/work by day, month, year
Learning: life-long in work/life
Excellence: in important things

Principles

- Our first principle is to be a learning organization that “thinks like a student” to support student success.
- Our second principle is to be flexible in adapting to our constantly changing business environment.
- Third is to be a policy-driven organization that finds strength in our ability to provide excellent counsel to government.
- Fourth – to be fiscally responsible and strategic in managing our spending.
- And fifth – to encourage shared leadership that increasingly leverages our diverse talents.

Organizational Structure

- We'll have four portfolios with four ADMs:
 - Management Services: Neil Matheson
 - Technology and Innovation: search
 - Students and Learning: Tom Vincent
 - System Infrastructure: Ruth Wittenberg
- I take great pleasure in announcing today that Ruth Wittenberg will be joining the Ministry of Advanced Education in the key role of Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM), System Infrastructure, effective May 1, 2006.
- Some of you may already know Ruth from the excellent work she has done as our ADM, Management Services Division, which provides corporate support services to the Ministry.
- In my short time with the Ministry I have gained a great appreciation of Ruth's professionalism, knowledge and expertise.

- Ruth will be key in rolling out some of our new approaches to working with all of you. Please join me in offering Ruth a warm welcome in her new role with the Ministry! Her leadership and knowledge of government will be definite assets as the Ministry evolves.
- The new Technology and Innovation portfolio is in “creation mode.”
- Bruce Schmidt from Genome BC is chairing a small task group with Ken Armour from my ministry, Mark Gillis from the Ministry of Economic Development, and Max Blouw at UNBC. They are hard at work describing the portfolio, its mandate and its organization.
- Once their work is done, we will be starting a search for the new ADM, probably in May.

Conclusion

- I am looking forward to the next step in our ministry’s evolution.
- And I am looking forward to enhanced collaboration through our entire system, which will keep higher education strong in this province.
- We need institutions to work together so that they develop niches that are complementary, not competitive – whether that be in teaching or in research.
- We need to find ways to “guarantee” places for students who successfully complete their first two years at our colleges ... and must move on to finish their degrees.
- And we need to respect the distinctive and important roles played by all our institutions – public and private – so students have the widest possible choice of the best possible learning experiences.
- We face challenges in the years ahead – some we can predict, some we can’t even imagine.
- But together, we’re working hard on the changes we can see coming down the track ... and building solid relationships we can call on when the unexpected materializes.
- I want to thank all of you for everything you’re doing – with the ministry, and with each other – to create strong institutions, and a cohesive post-secondary system that will be able to respond and adapt to new demands.
- And I look forward to working with you as we continue to build on our accomplishments over the coming year.
- Thank you.