



Algonquin College
College Academic Council
Annual Report 2015-2016

I would like to start by thanking my colleagues for the opportunity to Chair the College Academic Council. Their diligence and commitment through volunteered efforts has made it both a pleasure and privilege to work alongside to fulfill our mandate.

The College Academic Council held its first meeting on September 28, 2015. Council welcomed comments from Leslie Wyman, Chair, 2014-2015, who acknowledged that this Council, through its membership, offered a forum to stakeholders from all constituencies to address the challenges the College faces going forward. Election of a Chair for the current academic year was deferred to the October meeting. However, members of the Executive Committee were identified as follows:

Executive Committee:

- tbc, Chair
- Leslie Wyman, Past Chair
- Jeff Ross, Academic representative
- Jim Kyte, Administrative representative
- Deborah Buck, Support Staff representative
- Sara Grainger, Student representative

Brought forward from the previous year, Claude Brulé provided an update on **Online Learning** at the College. He noted that full-time faculty can and have participated in the delivery of online learning for many years. The recent development of a new Digital Strategy for the College has been helpful in articulating a general direction for future growth of such participation, and to do so with the principles and guidance from a framework that speaks to criteria/considerations for instructional design and delivery of curriculum, quality assurance, as well as professional development (PD) for faculty.

At the October 26, 2015 meeting, the election of the Chair was deferred to the November meeting, as a nominee was not present to accept the nomination. Leslie Wyman kindly agreed to continue as Chair for the meeting.

Leah-Anne Brown presented on the **Faculty Professional Development Program** noting that the program was launched September 2015. Information pertaining to the program, including Frequently Asked Question, is available on the HR website at: <http://www.algonquincollege.com/hr/managers-toolkit/fpdp/>

An update on **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition** was provided by Joe Ranieri and Mary Curnow. They outlined the process a student follows to complete a PLAR highlighting the benefits of this learning option. A comprehensive website is located at: <http://www.algonquincollege.com/plar>

Council also reviewed the list of compiled priority topics for the academic year providing additional information on each of the items.

At the November 30, 2015 meeting, I was elected Chair. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Leslie for her able chairing of Council over the course of her tenure.

Council continued discussions on **Priority Topics** and finalized the list as follows:

1. eText Initiative
2. Mental Health
3. Admissions Policy
4. Learning Management System - BlackBoard™
5. Additional items of interest included receiving a report on the status of the Student Course Feedback survey, and a report from the Hybrid/Online Course Instruction Mode (HOCIM) Working Group .

Council also received an update on the **Exam Procedure Guidelines** from Jo-Ann Aubut with a request for Council representation on a working group that would develop generic College-wide guidelines. Janna Holmes and Judy Flieler volunteered to participate.

At the January 25, 2016 meeting the new Registrar, Krista Pearson, was welcomed and introduced to Council. A number of presentations were received as follows.

eText Initiative – Larry Weatherdon and Jo-Ann Aubut updated Council on how identified issues were being addressed and provided a demonstration of the Digital Resources Portal and Dashboard.

Mental Health – Sandra McCormick, John Muldoon, Carmen Hust, Connie Powers and Margaret Lewis provided a summary presentation on the wide variety of initiatives underway at the College to address mental health concerns for both students and employees. As well, an update on the new provincial legislation on sexual harassment was provided.

SA07 Student Conduct – Revisions to Policy SA07 suggested by the Student Conduct Working Group and by the Senior Vice President, Academic were reviewed with Council by Laura Stanbra. Members provided additional feedback on the recommended revisions.

SA16 Sexual Assault and Violence – Laura Stanbra reviewed the suggested amendments to Policy SA16 which were meant to provide clarity on processes and procedures outlined. Members provided additional feedback.

The February 29, 2016 meeting topics included:

Policy Reviews – Jo-Ann Aubut brought a number of College policies for Council review in accordance with the AD01 Administration of Policies 5-year cyclical mandatory policy review date or advanced due to process changes. The following policies were accepted without comment:

- AA05 Advanced Standing
- AA18 Academic Dishonesty and Discipline
- AA20 Plagiarism
- AA38 Program Quality Assurance

The following policies engendered feedback to be taken under advisement:

- AA30 Program Suspension
- AA37 Review of Final Grades

Jo-Ann Aubut also took the opportunity to provide Council an update on the **College Quality Assurance Audit Process** that the College is currently undergoing.

Jo-Ann Aubut provided the background on formation of the **Exam Guidelines** Working Group noting the contributions of Judy Flieler and Janna Holmes. The document, *Exam Procedure Guidelines and Best Practices for Faculty Members*, was well received with next steps identified as review by Deans and Chairs followed by distribution to faculty and students.

Admissions Policy - Krista Pearson presented on the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' policy framework that defines the roles and responsibilities of Colleges. This framework can be found at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca.pepg/audiences/colleges/>. Jo-Ann Aubut spoke to the Program level admissions criteria and the guidelines documented on Academic Development's "Program Development, Approval and Implementation Process Guide" documented at: <http://www.algonquincollege.com/program-development/program-development/>

Questions about the **Lock-down Drill** announcement were addressed by Claude Brulé. He advised that as a result of such questions, training sessions have been scheduled and further communication will be provided by the Risk Management team.

The final meeting of academic year took place on April 4, 2016.

Jo-Ann Aubut presented the revisions to **AA106 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)**. Council accepted the revisions but advised that the policy should speak to a timeline for when a course may be submitted for evaluation.

As part of the initial review by the Program Evaluation Committee of a degree program in the Consent Renewal process, it is a requirement noted in the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) Handbook that the report and action plan are disseminated to a variety of relevant members of the College. Maggie Cusson and Altaf Sovani presented the **Bachelor of Hospitality and Tourism Consent Renewal** and spoke to the findings of the Program Evaluation Committee site visit of November 20, 2015.

Harpreet Singh-Sonu and Micheline Besner presented the Blackboard™ Template that supports the **Hybrid and Online Quality Assurance Standards (HOQAS)** adopted by the College and discussed opportunities for Curriculum Services to support the applications of the HOQAS template to enhance the quality of hybrid and online courses across the College.

Robyn Heaton, Chair of the **Hybrid/Online Course Instruction Mode (HOCIM) Working Group**, provided a report on the work conducted to date by the Working Group which was established with a mandate to develop a framework to provide clear guidance, direction and support to faculty and staff regarding the design and delivery of Algonquin College's hybrid and online learning environments.

In conclusion, I trust the hard work and commitment of staff from all areas is demonstrated through this report. As I conclude my mandate as Chair for the 2015-2016 academic year, I reflect on the level of dedication, the quality and expertise found within our members and sense of satisfaction that we have fulfilled our mandate for this year. Moving forward, I look forward to continuing with the Council in our discussions that foster good policy making and a proactive approach to turning challenge into opportunity.

I would like to thank all members around the table for their dedication. A special thank you to Claude Brulé, for his experience, professionalism and guidance and to Nancy Makila for her ongoing support of Council activities.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Ross, OCT, RSE
Chair
College Academic Council