



## **ABORIGINAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

5 March 2013

3:35 p.m. in The Dr Roger Epp Conference room 2-004

**PRESENT:** Jerome Melancon (Chair)      Glynnis Hood      Allen Berger  
Mike Clermont      Brittany Lehman      Petra Cegielly  
Mark Chytrcek      Mary-Anne Falk (Recorder)

**REGRETS:** Trina Harrison      Michael Swampy

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:40 p.m.

2. **Agenda**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

3. **Approval of previous meeting minutes**

The minutes from the 5 February 2013 meeting were approved as presented.

**MOTION:** CEGIELNY/CLERMONT

**Carried**

4. **Remarks from Committee Members**

- Jerome: Thank you to Allen for communicating with the Provost and moving along committee concerns and ideas.
- Petra: Congratulations to Brittany for winning the 2013 Spirit Seekers Aboriginal Youth Role Model Award in the category of Academic Excellence.
- Allen: We have received support from the Provost's Office to increase Petra's position to full time. We're working on the details including confirmation of the duration of this increase. Brittany and Petra participated in some of the conversations with the Dean and Vice Dean from Native Studies for some conversations last week. We talked about the use of video conferencing to share more curricular opportunities with the hope that we could eventually mount a major or minor certificate in Native Studies.

5. **Business**

a. **Update on Space Planning (Allen)**

The Provost has shared our ideas for an Aboriginal gathering space with F&O. The planner assigned to our campus will be here the next two days for other meetings and she has asked for an opportunity to see the space and learn more about it. We will emphasize to her about getting back here for a second visit that will include this committee and student voices to initiate the process of planning for the renovation project.

Over the next couple of days we're talking about a new building with the planners and it is important to attend and bring up a possible space for smudging (prayer room and/or classroom space) and Aboriginal gathering space in the new building.

*ACTION: Allen will bring forward the ideas for a smudging space with the architects on behalf of this committee. Allen will update the committee when we can proceed with the next steps.*

b. **Lloyd Barber Summit on Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education, "Identifying Best Practices" – May 23-24, 2013 – University of Regina (Jerome)**

Mark and Petra will attend (Mark's PEA for his costs and the Dean's Office budget for Petra's costs). Petra will also be attending a conference in Saskatoon June 12 (many Masters & PhD students will be presenting their thesis). Roxanne will be presenting and Petra will be travelling with her to attend.

c. **Future Goals and Tasks for the Committee (Jerome)**

- Acknowledgement of traditional territory. We could have a standard statement to recognize on what traditional territory our campus sits. It might be worthwhile for us to look at creating a statement and making it a policy to read it before significant campus events. The University

Senate recently modified an existing statement that will be read at all convocations. They consulted in the development of their statement with aboriginal groups on the north campus. We could look into if it is broad for all campuses and/or seek guidance for adapting it for Augustana. This statement we create could also be used for guests to campus to use as an acknowledgement if they do not have their own statement.

*ACTION: Allen will seek additional information regarding the Senate statement and bring back for discussion with this committee. Petra will distribute the current north campus statement to the group.*

- Discuss things that we could do before we get a facility in place (host more events with an aboriginal focus: dancers, drumming, initiate discussions, bring a comedian to encourage community, etc.)
- Housing (accommodations for family and couples)
- Daycare
- Aboriginal Student Award (financial or recognition: criteria is leadership, academic, or performance)
- Introduce a speaker series
- Addressing racism in the community

*ACTION: Bring these items forward for discussion at a future meeting.*

d. **Engaging Maskwacis Cultural College** (Jerome)

*Tim Hanson and Tyson Lazaruk joined for this portion of the meeting.* We are in close proximity to MCC and it is important we have good relationships with both the College and Hobbema. We have already been meeting with MCC management regarding possible block transfer agreements.

Members discussed several questions and ideas:

1. What policies do we have / could we put in place to make the transition to Augustana easier?
2. How do we become the institution of choice for MCC students to transfer to?
3. What barriers are in place that restrict MCC students from coming to Augustana?

MCC is an important institution in our geographical area. It has been communicated to the College that some barriers arise due to a minimum math requirement for admission to Augustana that is not there (although upgrading and transferability may become more of a focus they are working towards). Students may have a general fear of leaving the reserve and moving to University. The more time Petra, Tyson, former students, etc. can spend at MCC [getting to know staff/students and bringing them to campus to become comfortable] the better. The professor/student experience brings it together once they're here. Tyson could adapt the way he recruits to make it more understandable there.

Petra sometimes sees MCC staff at events and they've asked for Augustana to visit MCC more often, tours of our campus, and updates on block transfers. We ought to give a high priority to their requests. It would be important to involve Harry Prest in follow-up conversations regarding block transfers. Tyson can work with Petra to host groups to our campus and make his visits to MCC. The advisors at MCC will be the best resource on how to meet admission requirements so continuing to build those relationships will be helpful.

If we could run a speaker series there it could build relationships and make prospective students more comfortable with more people here. A "Faculty Speakers Bureau" could be posted on the website and available for anyone to book. This is an idea to let people know that there are faculty with these areas of expertise available and willing to speak.

Aside from the difficulties of moving to Camrose, the main challenge to transfers, either for individuals or in blocks, seems to be the difficulty of meeting the Augustana Campus / University of Alberta entry requirements. Since we are not likely to want to change these requirements, two options remain open: 1) we can remedy the issue by providing the courses on campus, rather than at the North Campus as is currently the case with the transition year program; 2) we can help students understand what options are open for them to obtain the right qualifications (at

MCC, through PACE or NorQuest, for instance), without necessarily providing a strict roadmap. MCC might be an institution we can create special bonds with, which would not entail the same actions with all similar institutions. We should meet with representatives from MCC to create closer relationships and a better understanding of our mutual needs and desires. It would be a good idea to select representatives from both institutions to maintain these relationships. A visit from MCC at the end of March might be a good opportunity to do so. The possibility of holding a meeting at MCC was also mentioned.

*ACTION: This item will be further discussed at our next meeting, so as to explore community-buidling possibilities through our committee, independently of recruitment efforts.*

e. **Recruitment** (Jerome)

The item was not addressed, as time did not permit.

*ACTION: To be brought for discussion at a later date, preferably before the next recruitment cycle.*

7. **Next Meeting Date**

The date of March 19 has been suggested; Mary-Anne will consult with the committee members to check availability.

8. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

**MOTION:** CLERMONT/CEGIELNY

***Carried***