Faculty Council Report — February 2010

Context

The Professional Learning Centre [PLC] today is engaged in the business of providing continuing education to the community of Information professionals, via classes offered on campus in Toronto, in rented facilities in Ottawa, and selectively via the Internet and as on-premises contracted offerings.

At this point in time, a proposal to convert the PLC into an Extra-Departmental Unit (Type C) [EDU:C] is on the table for approval. Approval will expand the mandate of this unit, and see it rebranded as the “iSchool Institute”.

Summary of Recent Actions

A new Director for the PLC (Bruce Stewart) was hired after a search in the fall of 2009 and started work 14/12/2009.

The PLC has co-sponsored the Managing Information in the Public Sector 2010 conference. The PLC Director is the Conference Chair. Several of the PLC’s instructors will be presenting breakout sessions. Two of the keynote speakers were proposed by the PLC (Euan Semple, UK; Jon Husband, Vancouver) and accepted.

Most of the instructors teaching for the PLC have gathered in feedback/planning sessions to gather ideas for enhancing the existing certificates and courses. The engagement and participation levels has been excellent.

The PLC’s Advisory Board met 27 January 2010 to review the plans for the year ahead and offer advice. The response is strongly in favour of our direction.

A gap analysis of the PLC’s existing courses and certificates has been commissioned and the first draft received, showing approximately twenty immediate opportunities for enhancement to the PLC’s education offering. This work is being done by John O’Brien, MISt. from this Faculty.

A new course on personal information security and a plan for a certificate in using public information for intelligence-type analysis are being developed by Christopher Brown-Syed, Ph.D. from this Faculty. The individual course will be used to test the market for the certificate before committing to the development costs.
The PLC partnered with one of its instructors, Peter de Jager, to put on a webinar to promote his course. (We are considering doing this routinely in the future.) The PLC has also filmed all instructors taking part in the planning sessions promoting their courses, for use on the PLC website.

A revamp of the PLC website’s visual appearance, and integration of the promotional videos filmed, is underway.

**Planned Activities & Priorities**

During the next reporting period, the PLC will be expanded into the iSchool Institute (pending approval). Even if approval is not forthcoming, the forthcoming period will be used to invest in new and revised courses. The development plan, when complete, is expected to take several years to fulfil.

Items for the iSchool Institute are all to occur only if approval is achieved.

**March 2010**

- Complete long-term course development plan for instructor-led courses, based on Instructor feedback, the gap analysis and other market assessments.
- Plan launch day for the Institute — public speakers, possible media partner to record/broadcast the lecture.
- Develop marketing materials to support the Institute, and a communications plan to former PLC students.
- Plan approach to creating more Internet properties, both instructor-led and tutor-supported.

**April 2010**

- Plan public lecture for May-June 2010
- Develop marketing program to reach executives and senior managers in potential client organizations.
- Launch the new PLC/Institute website.
- Determine market potential for a publications series of commercially-relevant research findings.

**May 2010**

- Open discussions with industry to determine if an equivalent to the University of Washington iSchool’s research partnerships for commercialization are of interest to the supplier community.
- Take delivery of the personal information security course and offer it during the Summer 2010 session.
- Commission a rewrite of the *Managing in Information Organizations* (MIO) certificate, for delivery beginning in Fall 2010.

Throughout the summer months, course development and marketing will predominate.
Operational Summary

The PLC balances its revenue and expenses, with any positive amounts generated split between the PLC “carry forward” fund and the Faculty as “profit”, and any negative amounts covered from the “carry forward” fund. As a self-funded entity, all PLC expenses, including staff salaries, must be earned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Budget 2009-2010</th>
<th>Actual to 01 Feb 2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$506,951.00</td>
<td>$389,838.94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>$506,951.00</td>
<td>$387,430.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carry Forward</td>
<td>$447,363.38</td>
<td>$228,509.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Profit to Date</td>
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<td>$2,408.94</td>
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Transfers to the Faculty from the PLC “carry forward” funds in this period were:

- $35,000.00 — 2007-08 Faculty Overheads, not collected for previous years.
- $60,000.00 — 2007-08 “profit” to Faculty.
- $72,854.00 — 2008-09 Faculty Overheads.

Overhead payments for 2009-10 are still expected within this fiscal year.

During this period $51,000.00 was transferred from the “carry forward” to the PLC reserve. The PLC reserve fund currently sits at $100,667.95.

*Human Resources:* The PLC Director was hired during the period. No other staff additions, changes or deletions occurred.

*Other Sources of Financial Support:* None obtained. It is hoped the transition to the Institute will open opportunities in this area.

*Space Issues:* None at this time.

*Students in the PLC:* The PLC offered or has scheduled and confirmed delivery of 68 courses during the period 1 September 2009 to 28 February 2010, serving a total of 980 unique students, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Toronto</th>
<th>Ottawa</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>On Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
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</table>
In addition, 240 subscriptions are in effect to the *Taxonomy Guide*, although nearly 70% of these are on a complimentary basis for instructors, or students who successfully completed our course offering in the subject area.

**Other Matters**

Much of the future of the PLC is tied up in gaining approval to the Institute proposal.

There have been resignations from the Advisory Board which require replacements. The Board’s mix of backgrounds as presently constituted does not match the student interest in the PLC offerings (the Board is strongly biased toward Library needs, but the students are strongly selecting Records and Information Management courses). Replacements will be sought based on whether the PLC is becoming the Institute or remaining as it is currently constituted, as the terms and duties of the Advisory Board change if the Institute is created.

Bruce A. Stewart  
Director, PLC  
17 February 2010