

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Senate Committee on University Priorities
Memorandum

S.02-11

TO: Senate

FROM: John Waterhouse
Chair, SCUP
Vice President, Academic

RE: The Dialogue Institute

DATE: January 22, 2002

Attached is the proposed Strategic Plan and Constitution for The Dialogue Institute, submitted for consideration by Dr. Robert Anderson, Chair of the Academic Advisory Committee. This will be a Schedule B Institute reporting to the Vice President, Research in accordance with Policy R 40.01.

The Senate Committee on University Priorities reviewed the proposal at its January 9, 2002 meeting. The proposal was unanimously approved. Once approved by Senate, the proposal will be submitted to the Board of Governors.

Motion:

That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the establishment of The Dialogue Institute as outlined in document

Attachment.

- c. B. Clayman, VP, Research
- R. Anderson, Chair, Academic Advisory Committee

The Dialogue Institute

Strategic Plan

Purpose

Dialogue is a process of collaborative listening and learning to discover meanings among diverse participants. If respectful, this dialogic process gives recognition to sources of agreement and disagreement around complex issues. Dialogue is thus a special form and method of engagement with others, as well as a commitment to listen and communicate without condition. An emerging interest in dialogue-related research and education has been identified in a growing number of disciplines including communication, philosophy, sociology, business, political science and education.

The purpose of the Dialogue Institute is to promote the study and practice of dialogue within and outside the University. The Institute is the University's centre for research and education with respect to the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. It will provide a focus for academic activity associated with the Centre for Dialogue and will be the point of contact for affiliated institutions, organizations and individuals.

Governance

The charter and constitution of the Institute provide for an appointed Director and a Steering Committee, reporting to the Vice-President, Research (see attached).

Steering Committee

The membership of the existing Academic Advisory Committee, appointed by the Vice President Academic for a two-year term, is as follows:

Robert Anderson (Chair) Professor, School of Communication to 09/01/03
Len Berggren, Professor, Mathematics, to 09/01/03
Joan Collinge, Director, Centre for Distance Education to 01/01/03
Ann Cowan (Secretary), North Growth Management Director of Programs to 01/01/05
Brian Lewis, Dean, Faculty of Applied Sciences to 09/01/03
Mark Wexler, Professor, Faculty of Business Administration to 01/01/05
Yosef Wosk, Director, Interdisciplinary Studies, Continuing Studies to 01/01/05

It is intended that the University will appoint these individuals as Members of the Steering Committee of the Institute. The Academic Advisory Committee would then dissolve. Additional appointments may be recommended to the Administrative Officer.

Fellows

The Institute will make special recognition of individuals with great experience in dialogue, such as:

Dr. Jack Blaney, Senior Fellow. Dr. Blaney is former President of SFU, and is currently Chair, Fraser Basin Council; a Commissioner on the International Joint Commission; a Director, Vancouver Board of Trade; Advisor, Vancouver Children's Arts Umbrella and a member of the Academic Advisory Board of the Institute of Canadian Bankers.

Dr. Mark Winston, Fellow. Dr. Winston is Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at SFU, and is developing a Dialogue Semester program for undergraduates. Dr. Winston is a recipient of the prestigious Killam Fellowship from Canada Council for the Arts (2000-2002), the Science Council of B.C.'s Gold medal in Science and Engineering and Eve Savory Award for Science Communication, and the Academic of the Year (from the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of B.C.).

Glenn Sigurdson, Q.C., Research Associate. Mr. Sigurdson has wide experience in negotiation and dialogue with respect to salmon, mining, residential schools, and other complex issues. He is recognized internationally as a leader in this field, and is a founder and former President of the world-wide Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution (SPIDR).

Institute Associates

Simon Fraser University faculty who have agreed to become Institute Associates include:

Dr. Peter Williams, Director, School of Resource and Environmental Management

Dr. Michael Howlett, Professor, Department of Political Science

Dr. Liz Elliott, Assistant Professor, School of Criminology

Dr. Sam Black, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy

Research Partnerships

Alliances for training and research purposes have been established with the following:

The Centre for the Study of Peace & Conflict, University of Toronto

Director: Dr. Thomas Homer-Dixon

The Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, University of Hawaii

Director: Dr Majid Tehranian

Institute for Environmental Negotiation, University of Virginia

Director: Dr. E. Franklin Dukes

The Dialogue Project, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Director: Dr. William Isaacs (and President of Dia*logos Incorporated)

Trade Union Program, Harvard University

Executive Director: Dr. Elaine Bernard

Activities

Research

An emerging interest in dialogue-related research and education has been identified in a growing number of disciplines including communication, philosophy, sociology, business, political science, anthropology, and education. The study of dialogue thus has diverse intellectual roots. As a commitment to communicate without condition, a special form of engagement, and collaborative listening and learning – dialogue can be studied and understood through a kind of conceptual and empirical synthesis from different perspectives.

The Institute will study and evaluate dialogues that are planned and held in the Centre for Dialogue— analyzing, for example, the best composition of large groups, the staging of issues and timing of interventions, the placement and role of key speakers, and the flow and interruption of dialogue. Dialogue is an ancient form of communication and each tradition around the world approaches it in different ways. Members of the Institute will study both the pragmatics of actual dialogues and the tradition and theory of dialogue. The evaluation of dialogues will provide insight for training and improved planning of further dialogues. It will also enable the Institute to use this empirical data to build theory to meet new situations.

Graduate students will be trained through Internships and their experience of dialogue will provide the basis for theses and dissertations in various departments. This research program will link the Institute with experts inside and outside the University involved in specific issues raised by the Dialogue Forum and Symposium (see below). Institute Associates, Fellows, and Steering Committee members will be particularly involved in these linkages. The Research Partnerships described above are key to the evolution of this program, because international exchange of research findings and interpretations is essential to the development of the field.

Community Outreach and Public Programming

The Institute will be not only the means to sustain on-going relationships between the University and its communities; but also a window through which members of the public unaware of the Centre can learn about it and use it. Through activities outside the Centre, as well as within it, the Institute will foster an understanding of dialogue and its practical applications. The Dialogue Forum (see below) is designed to encompass five community-based dialogues, which will provide opportunities for observation, testing of principles and reporting. Student interns will be engaged in this process as well as faculty. Faculty will also be involved in the design of each forum, which will incorporate current theoretical research (i.e., in tourism) and its application to specific situations (i.e., the Olympic bid and difficult community consultations).

Dialogue Forum

The immediate objective of the Forum is to create effective processes to facilitate dialogue that leads to action and to test these processes in specific issue-driven conversations. These processes can then lead to strategic decision-making. This is a continuing Forum for reflection on practice and the dissemination of cumulative experience and analysis through publication and public gatherings.

The Dialogue Forum, initiated in September 2001, convened a gathering of senior executives, professionals, and academics who brought a diversity of experience in the dialogue process. Together, the group described situations requiring resolution, addressed the state of practice currently available and identified gaps in knowledge and practice. In 2002 the findings of the Dialogue Forum will be tested in five dialogues: tourism; mining; transportation and land use; Canadian youth; and, quality in health care. The results will be reported and reviewed continuously throughout the year and the initial group will reconvene in September 2002. The Dialogue Forum is intended to be foundational to the development of the Dialogue Institute.

Dialogue Symposium

The 2002 Dialogue Symposium will be a one-year later follow-up to the Symposium on Dialogue and Negotiation. The 2001 Symposium opened the Centre for Dialogue and was oriented to dialogue professionals. This Symposium is to be an annual event, with three functions: 1) a research-oriented invitational consultation on research and methods; 2) a wide symposium for dialogue and negotiation professionals; and 3) a public event in the Centre reporting on progress on examples of dialogue previously presented and discussed. The plan is to hold this Symposium in the summer, annually.

Through interaction, experts outside the university and Simon Fraser University faculty will develop collaborative research and development projects, and these proposals will be placed before SSHRC, foundations, and other funding agencies.

Credit Courses connected with the Institute

The Semester in Dialogue is an interdisciplinary undergraduate semester for a cohort of exceptional students, designed to develop collaborative learning and problem solving across disciplines. The Institute and this credit semester have complementary objectives, and there is opportunity for mutually supportive activity, including the role of Dialogue Semester students in projects of the Institute.

Negotiation and Dialogue as Communication is a course (CMNS 447) taught regularly by Robert Anderson in the School of Communication. At the heart of the course is a framework for analysis of negotiation and dialogue in situations of conflict. In addition, a series of guests enables students to engage with experienced professionals who are involved with dialogue and negotiation. These guests will also be involved in other aspects of the Institute's work. There is additionally a graduate course (CMNS 855) on Negotiation and Dialogue, also taught by Robert Anderson.

Professional Development

A model for a series of professional development courses aimed at improving practice in a range of settings will be developed through the Institute and will provide a source of revenue and further partnerships with practicing professionals.

This kind of training will focus on the themes of the dialogues carried forward from the Dialogue Forum and Symposium, namely how difficult issues involve parties in adversarial relationships, how methods of dialogue must prevail over and through these difficulties, and how parties can find meaning and value in difficult conversations. Professional education seminars will form part of a revenue source for the Institute.

Publications

The Institute will develop a website with an interactive discussion forum on research and education and a strategy for publications in popular and academic publications. The Dialogue Institute has a plan for its website that will include an interactive portal as well as an archive of academic papers arising from the work of the Institute and a record of dialogues that have occurred there. It will be a source of information and a place for discussion of issues and experience. It will connect individuals and organizations engaged in dialogue on important issues to others and to sources of support for their work.

In conjunction with the CBC, the Institute also plans to develop collaborative projects to engage Canadians in discussion on important current issues. In addition, a series of reports and publications is envisioned. Faculty involved in the Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue will disseminate information about the project through educational publications, at conferences and popular media.

Specific publications will include: the annual Dialogue Report; Guidelines for Convening, Moderating and Closing a Dialogue; the Dialogue Continuum: Understanding the Terms of Engagement for Important Conversations; Determining Success: How to Evaluate the Outcomes of a Dialogue; Dialogue Watch; an on-line monthly commentary on world-wide dialogues; proceedings of the annual Dialogue and Negotiation Symposium; Reports of the Dialogue Forum.

Presentations

The Director and Fellows will present work developed at the Institute at professional meetings, and will speak to community organizations.

Sources of Funding

Funding is being sought from foundations, granting agencies, and through project funding. A grant from the Canadian Pacific Charitable Foundation for the Dialogue Forum, which is a project of the Institute, for example, has provided partial funding for a research associate and secretarial support. Start up funding of \$10,000 will be provided by the Vice President Academic in year one and an additional \$10,000 considered in year two, if necessary, but the business plan predicts sustainability in year three.

The Dialogue Institute

Constitution

The purposes of The Dialogue Institute are to promote the study and practice of dialogue within and outside the University. The Institute is the University's centre for research, learning and training efforts with respect to the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue.

1. The Dialogue Institute shall be governed in accordance with the University policies including R.40.01 concerning Centres and Institutes. The Institute will be a **Schedule B** Institute under the Policy, and its **Administrative Officer** is the Vice President, Research. If this Constitution or the decisions of the Institute Director or Steering Committee differ from University policy, University policy shall prevail.

2. Governance of the Institute is by an appointed **Steering Committee**. The Committee will have up to nine voting members. Duration of the appointment shall be staggered to ensure continuity in the Committee. A majority of the members of the Steering Committee shall be regular faculty in the University. Members of the Steering Committee shall be appointed by the Vice President, Research, the Administrative Officer for the Institute.

3. The University shall appoint a **Director**, who shall be ex-officio member of the Steering Committee. The Director will be a regular employee of the University, and will be appointed by the Administrative officer, except in the case of the first Director (see 6 below). The North Growth Management Director of Programs at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue is an ex-officio voting member of the Steering Committee, and will play a central role in the Institute's programs.

4. The Steering Committee may constitute an **Executive Committee** (the Director plus at least two others) to address committee business. The composition of this Executive Committee may change annually, so that membership in the Steering Committee does not become onerous. The

North Growth Management Director of Programs in the Centre for Dialogue (or designate) shall provide the secretariat for the Steering Committee and the Institute.

5. The **Steering Committee** will meet at least once per semester, and will approve and forward an Annual Report to the University on its activities. It will recommend appointment of Fellows, approve budgets and expenditures, and make decisions on programs and projects. Members of the Committee may vote on specific issues as necessary. Fellows and Associates of the Institute may be invited as appropriate.

6. In **the first instance only**, the current Academic Advisory Committee of the Wosk Centre for Dialogue shall meet following issuance of a Charter for the Institute, in order to identify (by vote if the Committee so decides) and recommend an individual to become Director. This recommendation shall be made to the Administrative Officer. Following policy R.40.01 concerning Centres and Institutes, the Administrative Officer will recommend appointment to the President. The Director and existing members of the Academic Advisory Committee shall become the Steering Committee, at the request of the Administrative Officer. The Academic Advisory Committee may then dissolve.

7. In the case of the **second and subsequent** Directors of the Institute, the Steering Committee will recommend appointment of an individual to be the **Director** to the Administrative Officer, who shall review and recommend the appointment to the Governing Committee for Centres. The term of the appointment shall be for two or three years, renewable. Provision is made for appointment of an acting Director for shorter periods in special circumstances, normally chosen from the Steering Committee.

8 **Amendment of this Constitution** shall be by recommendation to the Governing Committee for Centres from the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall provide reasonable notice of a motion (and its content) to amend the Constitution to all members, and the Director and secretariat must ensure that each Steering Committee member knows that such a motion is to be discussed and decided at a forthcoming meeting.