In June 2007 an external review of the LIDC was conducted by a team consisting of Dr. Christian Blanchette from the University of Ottawa, Dr. Heather Smith from the University of Northern British Columbia and Ms. Lynn Copeland, Dean, Library Services. Their report was delivered to me at the end of October 2007. I immediately forwarded it to the LIDC for review and comment.

The review team's report was distributed to all LIDC staff members and an extensive consultation was conducted with both staff and management groups participating. I received the LIDC's response to the external review report at the beginning of December 2007.

Summaries of the review team's report and the LIDC's response are available at:


Although the process has been more protracted than normal, many of the recommendations will prove useful in setting future directions for the operations of the LIDC and, more broadly, in helping to define SFU's mission and plans in the strategically important areas of teaching and learning.

The central recommendations of the review team focus around three themes:

1. Encouraging greater participation from faculty members in developing a vision and a support system for teaching and learning at SFU
2. Changing the organization and operations of the LIDC to make it more efficient and responsive to the needs of the community
3. Focusing more attention on harmonizing LIDC operations and planning with SFU's vision for teaching and learning, and expanding the breadth of its program evaluations

I wish to begin implementing the report's recommendations by focusing on the issues identified in the first three recommendations (i.e., Recommendations 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3). Essentially these call
for the development of a vision and strategic plan for teaching and learning at SFU as a way of aligning University priorities and coordinating the activities of the LIDC, academic departments and Faculties, and other support units.

Although the reviewers suggested that SCUTL with the support of the LIDC lead this effort, I believe the University would be better served by a more comprehensive, consultative approach. What is needed is a major task force on teaching and learning to carry out this task, with broad representation from the various stakeholders. These would include (but not necessarily be limited to) the Faculties, SCUTL, the LIDC, the Institute for the Study of Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines, University Curriculum, the Library, Student Services, Continuing Studies, Academic Computing Services, and interested faculty, staff and students. I am pleased that you have agreed with this proposal and appointed me to chair the task force. As we discussed, the task force will report to the VPA and decisions on the balance of the review team’s recommendations about the LIDC will occur after its work is concluded.

As a first step, soon I will assemble a small advisory committee that will propose the structure and membership of the task force, develop its terms of reference, and outline a schedule for the completion of its work.

Further, in accordance with his prior request to me, Dr. David Kaufman’s term as Director, LIDC will end on August 31, 2008. David will take an administrative leave from Sept. 1, 2008 – Aug. 31, 2009, after which he will return as a Professor in the Faculty of Education. I intend to conduct a search for his replacement in the Fall 2008.

In the interim, I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Bill Glackman has agreed to take on the role of Acting Director until a new Director is appointed. Bill is well acquainted with the LIDC staff and its operations. He currently serves as Associate Director-Special Projects. He also served as interim Director of the Centre for University Teaching in 2000/01 and was instrumental in establishing the model that ultimately led to the creation of the LIDC in 2001. I am confident that Bill will provide excellent leadership, support and guidance to the LIDC through the coming year.