Summary
LIDC Response to External Review

Dr. Christian Blanchette, University of Ottawa and Dr. Heather Smith, University of Northern British Columbia conducted an external review of LIDC in June 2007. Their report was received by LIDC in November 2007. A response to the external review was requested by Dr. Bill Krane, Associate Vice-President Academic. The response, summarized below, was the result of the following process:

1. The report was distributed to all LIDC staff for review.
2. The manager of each division met with staff and discussed the report’s findings.
3. Managers prepared a summary report of each division reaction.
4. Staff were invited to complete an online survey regarding the report’s recommendations.
5. An all staff meeting was held, managers reported for each division, and an open discussion followed.

Limitations of Evaluation Process

The results of the evaluation process were viewed as valuable and important even though there is not strong support for all recommendations. Many staff noted that there were errors in perception, and aspects of LIDC operation were ignored or not seen, or treated very lightly in comparison to faculty development, even though these functions are very important to LIDC and SFU. Some suggested that a three-day visit was not enough time to carry out a “deep enough” analysis.

Three Key Areas of Concern From the LIDC External Review

This summary is framed under three key areas of concern as derived from the external evaluation document:

1. Greater involvement of faculty members
2. Make changes to LIDC organization and operations
3. Improve planning and evaluation

Each LIDC division submitted a response to the review. This summary is constructed to represent the majority opinion as identified by all LIDC staff in the online survey, comments and the division reports. Some recommendations are not addressed here because the majority of staff were neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the recommendation.

Greater Involvement of Faculty Members

New faculty development division (Recommendations 1.4, 2.4, 3.1)

Overall LIDC staff are neutral on this issue as indicated by the survey. However, it is apparent from the ESI report, and comments from LIDC professional staff most directly involved in teaching enhancement that a new division is not generally supported as an effective way to increase faculty involvement. ESI has strongly asserted that the visioning and needs assessment work should be done first before any LIDC re-organization. As well, during 2007 work was begun on the design of a new approach to faculty development and this, with appropriate inputs from the faculty and SFU community during 2008 will result in new programs that are expected
to provide a more integrated and needs-based approach to the already extensive professional development activities coordinated by LIDC.

Expand the model of embedded faculty developers (Recommendation 4.1)
There is strong support for an outreach mechanism to effectively support faculty teaching and program development, and also to open communication lines between specific departments and LIDC so that real needs can be expressed. The visiting review team, likely due to the time constraints, did not understand the details of our “embedded” activities. In fact, LIDC has conducted two pilot tests of the embedded concept ---one in Business Administration and the other in Health Science. Both of these pilots are deemed successful but each situation was unique and resulted in different outcomes. Further examination and discussions are needed to clarify whether such a model can be implemented on a larger scale.

Greater inclusion of faculty members in working groups (1.5)
There is general support for this recommendation. The current working group mandates will need review and amendment if faculty are members.

Make Changes to LIDC Operation & Organization

Assessment of the LIDC budget be conducted (2.1)
There is strong agreement with this recommendation. Of course, there is already an ongoing budget assessment by the managers and directors regarding priorities and spending levels. There is some discontent due to “unknown budgets” that result as a consequence of the larger SFU budget process. The feasibility and nature of this assessment begs discussion.

Managers should be responsible for their budget lines (2.2)
There is strong agreement with this recommendation although it is already partially implemented. Efforts are being made to provide more accurate and timely budget information to managers but this is a university challenge and not something peculiar to LIDC. Also, a collaborative approach to budget planning and management involving all directors and managers is the current LIDC practice.

Managers Committee as its main administrative body (3.3)
This recommendation is strongly supported and has already been implemented.

Review of the cost recovery model associated with Media Design and other LIDC units. (2.6)
A review is strongly supported however is an incorrect assumption that Media Design operates on a cost-recovery basis. Media Design generates revenue by charging a rate of approximately 30-40% of outside media companies for some services. They are not given targets nor are they dependent on their revenue.

Establish an SFU Internal Ad Hoc Review Committee on LIDC staff satisfaction (2.8)
Judging from the survey response there is good support for this recommendation although there were few comments about this recommendation.

Change the physical location of the LIDC (2.7)
Staff agrees that the Burnaby LIDC location is not ideal.

Rebranding of the LIDC (3.2)
There is good support for this recommendation. The Communications Working Group has already made some recommendations related to rebranding but professors, other than those advising from SCUTL, have not been involved in planning LIDC programs as the reviewers have recommended. The “LIDC” name is seen as awkward by many staff.

**Improve Planning and Evaluation**
(Recommendations 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 2.5, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2)

The recommendations about improving planning and evaluation showed the strongest approval in the staff survey. Developing an SFU vision statement (with LIDC input) could be the beginning of a comprehensive SFU plan for teaching and learning. Assessing needs and reviewing best practices is seen as part of the process.

Certainly all LIDC programs and workshops are routinely evaluated but a formal review of teaching enhancement programs is overdue.

The idea of establishing an annual survey of users and non-users of LIDC services has merit. The classroom services group is already developing a survey tool to measure instructor satisfaction with audio-visual equipment and classroom set-ups.

LIDC has already completed a classroom inventory of equipment and functionality. We have also piloted new classroom technologies and would like to do more of this work in the future. The recommendation for the development of a long term vision for classroom technology is strongly supported and LIDC is ready to contribute to this development. Many of our theatres and classrooms contain aging equipment that is just held together by our talented technical services staff. The current SFU committee structures for examining and planning classroom design and services may need review.