

Bulletin 08-4  
May 22, 2008

**June General Meeting Time Change**  
Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> is changed to

**Wednesday June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2:30 pm**  
**Croatian Cultural Centre**  
**3250 Commercial Drive**

**Very Important Meeting to Discuss Outcome of**  
**College Board Decisions and VCCFA Responses**

**Education Council advises against the Education Plan**  
**Government intervenes to protect some programming**  
**VCCFA votes against Budget at Operations Council**  
**Vancouver NPA Councillors cop out**  
**VCCFA Meetings & the College Board Meeting**

## **Education Council advises against the Education Plan**

*May 13 2008* ~ Dean Sandra Bailey said she was “honoured” to introduce the 2008/09 Education Plan for its final consideration by Education Council. “Honoured” to introduce a plan that shrinks VCC further by cutting 5% out of VCC’s offerings? Surely one could think of a more appropriate word.

Under the College and Institute Act EdCo is obligated to provide advice to the College Board on the annual Education Plan. It certainly fulfilled that obligation on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Dean Bailey read out a statement from the absent VP Education Alan Davis that was extremely critical of the programming set for cuts. It stated in part that there is “no culture of quality” at VCC. While we’d have to agree that there is no culture of quality administration at VCC, how program quality gets measured and when and how often and by whom are huge context questions his report ignores. Other administrators on EdCo chimed in their support for this “lack of quality” line. To hear them talk one would think students were being harmed in these programs.

VP Deanna Rexe challenged the group to think about accountability. Okay, but where's the accountability of neglectful administrators who were blind over the years to what now are identified as "quality" issues in certain programs?

VP Davis was at least more clear at his April 29<sup>th</sup> presentation to the Council. He said he was part of a decision to cut enough out the training plan to equate over a million dollars. That's what drove the examination of programming, not "quality" concerns. Afterwards, he found the programs to cut and the "quality" justification for cutting them.

President Dale Dorn was present and in answer to a question pointed out that ASL/Deaf Studies was actually in the 2008/09 Education Plan, without emphasizing that it was there in a terminal state "for cancellation" and without pointing out that new registrations had been at that point stopped. He reminded EdCo that they needed to have advice for the Board, not just a statement of opposition.

Many spoke to the need to have due process in decision making. **The motion from Dean Bailey to support the Education Plan failed.**

Sally Gibson (EdCo faculty member at large) then also spoke of the need for due process which wasn't present in the creation of this Education Plan; it "was not public or collaborative in a way that underpins most professional/academic organizations." She found that the plan was "too extreme" and used a "retrospective rationale" to justify cuts.

She moved that Education Council advise the Board to

- 1 adopt those sections of the 2008/09 Education Plan that do not involve program cancellations, suspensions, or reductions;
- 2 conduct a program review for each of those programs identified for cancellation or suspension, and restore those programs to 07/08 funding levels;
- 3 leave non-ITA programs identified for reductions at 07/08 funding levels until the end of August 2008, when student demand can be accurately confirmed;
- 4 conduct all of the aforementioned processes in an open, supportive and inclusive manner—in the spirit of intent which underpins the program review/renewal policy.

**This motion passed with the 3 administration reps opposed, representatives from the faculty, the students and one staff in favour, and one staff member abstaining.**

*Chair Karen Shortt now reports this advice to the Board at its next meeting, 5 pm, Thursday, May 29 at room 420.*

### **Government intervenes to protect some programming**

Two other related events were taking place the same afternoon as the EdCo debate. The media was visiting ASL/Deaf studies students and instructors to find out about the effects of the cuts and the subject of the VCC cuts especially in ASL/Deaf Studies were being raised by NDP Advanced Education critic, MLA Rob Fleming. *The Hansard record is available at [www.leq.bc.ca/hansard/38th4th/H80513p.htm#12353](http://www.leq.bc.ca/hansard/38th4th/H80513p.htm#12353)*

Fleming started by citing the letter from VCC Board Chair to Minister Coell which publicly blamed government underfunding for the cuts at VCC. Fleming demanded that Coell do something about it. MLA Jenny Kwan linked the cuts to Financial Management as an example of programming that is helpful to immigrants seeking entry into the BC workforce. The Minister dodged the questions with non-responses.

However, late the next day his office put out a statement the Ministry will “ensure that programs that provide education and training for persons with disabilities or support vulnerable people in our communities are preserved.”

In spite of some difficulties with the wording, this is good. Kudos to the instructors and students of ASL/Deaf Studies for being assertively in front on this issue, it’s one of the first bits of real progress this spring. However, the Minister wasn’t helpful later when challenged by the media. He confirmed he was protecting some programming but he also said that there would be no extra funding for that preservation.

The VCCFA has followed up with President Dorn. He said he had sought clarification because in the ASL/Deaf Studies case the actual students were not disabled. He confirmed that the Ministry wants that program preserved--no surprise there. The President said that was all the clarification he had sought and he has no other programming in mind for preservation. After the President and the Board Chair visited Victoria on Wednesday, the 21<sup>st</sup>, he reported on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> that there will be no other adjustments to the current Education Plan, so the other cuts are still in the works.

### **VCCFA votes against Budget at Operations Council**

The annual budget routinely comes to Operations Council for its recommendation to the Board.

This Council deals with the non-educational policy side of the College’s operation. It is chaired by VP Pete Legg and includes 10 administrators, two students, two CUPE reps and two VCCFA reps.

At the May 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of OpsCo, the VCCFA spoke and voted against the proposed budget. Not surprisingly, the positive budget recommendation from administration passed with the VCCFA, the SUVCC and one CUPE rep opposed. The other CUPE rep abstained.

### **Vancouver City NPA Councillors cop out**

In April FPSE’s President Council urged its locals to involve local government in raising community concern around the government’s late-in-the-day cutting of post secondary funding.

Several locals have had much support in having municipal governments in their communities pass a motion of concern and provide people with an opportunity to speak to the motion at public council sessions. For example, almost ten of the communities Malaspina serves passed the motion, with Malaspina FA people being there to speak to the issues.

The VCCFA worked with the Langara Faculty Association, CUPE 15 which represents staff at Langara, and student unions at UBC, VCC and Langara to bring a similar motion to the Vancouver City Council. Vision Councillor Raymond Louie agreed to sponsor it and placed it on the agenda consideration list. NPA Councillors, however, used their majority to block it getting on the agenda. Susanne Anton was particularly unhelpful in speaking against it.

## **VCCFA Meetings and the College Board Meeting**

**VCCFA ~ 3:30pm, Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, VCCFA Main Office, Fourth Floor, 402 West Pender (Pender & Homer)**

*Planning, Pizza, and Pop for any member wishing to help prepare for the upcoming Board meeting*

**College Board ~ 5pm, Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, Room 420, Downtown**

*Final Votes on the Education Plan and Budget for 2008/09. We would like as many members as possible to attend to show their support for their colleagues.*

**VCCFA ~ 2:30 pm, Wednesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, Croatian Cultural Centre**

*General Meeting rescheduled from June 18<sup>th</sup>. Very important discussion of outcome from the Board Meeting and the next steps for the VCCFA. We urge members to attend.*

**VCCFA ~ 9 am – 12 noon, Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, Room 419, Downtown Campus**

*Pension Info Session with Pension trustee John Wilson of the Capilano Faculty Association. Please call the office (604) 688-6210 to register.*