

Envision TRU Ginny Ratsoy, Associate Professor, English and Modern Languages

As an employee of this institution for 39 years, a former small city researcher, proponent of the scholarship of teaching and learning, and fairly involved community member, I will provide my visions of TRU in 2030 -- both building on existing strong suits and cultivating new strengths – based upon my experiences and observations.

### **Building on Existing Strengths**

I believe strongly that one of our greatest assets is our **comprehensiveness**. The kinds of partnerships that other institutions spend considerable time, effort, and funding to develop are ours for the taking. We have developed laddering between, for example, diploma and degree programs, and made some progress with Interdisciplinary degrees at the Bachelors and Masters levels. This is fertile ground on which to build. Let's do more: offering our faculty opportunities to transcend disciplinary silos and providing our students distinctive paths in their journey to degree completion is proof of TRU's learner-centredness.

From our days as a community college, through our time as a university college, our dedication to maintaining **small class sizes** has distinguished us. Let's not jeopardize that reputation; it both attracts students and helps insure quality instruction.

Similarly, we have cultivated a reputation for **undergraduate student research**. We have two stellar undergraduate conferences that have served as models for other universities, one of which, the PHP Conference, is remarkable in that it is student-driven and attracts presenters from across North America. Both the UGC and the PHP Conferences also offer presenters the opportunity to submit peer-reviewed articles. We have a Research Office that is strongly supportive of these conference and other undergraduate opportunities; the pilot project with *The Ormsby Review* – in which TRU Arts faculty and students co-publish book reviews -- is but one recent example. Other administrative wings could be more supportive and visible in this regard: provide funding, attend conference panels, etc.

Over the decades, this institution has made great strides in **Indigenization**. More still needs to be done. Reviving the TRU Start program for Indigenous students, hiring sufficient Indigenous faculty that a single employee in a department or faculty is not placed in a position of providing extraordinary service, and implementing awards for Indigenous students are just some examples.

**Service learning** and other experiential models have existed since our days as UCC. Our students have been of great benefit to our community – working with the school district, the City of Kamloops and local arts organizations, and developing annual “fun runs” for local charities, for example – as they put into practice their classroom

knowledge. During our UCC period, administration recognized faculty efforts as supervisors of serv learning students; let's go back to the time when this was not an "off-the-side of our desks" effort. By 2030, TRU could become known as a university that provides hands-on models to complement academic study.

### **Developing New Strengths**

Although we made some strong inroads into **faculty exchanges** during our time a UCC, that impetus seems to have been lost. Administrative support for faculty exchanges would not only likely result in more TRU students taking advantage of Study Abroad; it would also reinvigorate our faculty and help cement our commitment to Internationalization.

TRU would be wise to tap into a rich community resource: our **senior citizens**. Informally, TRU faculty in several disciplines share their wealth of knowledge with seniors, most notably the Kamloops Adult Learners Society. However, as yet, administration has passed up on opportunities to develop institutional links that would serve both parties well, or even to acknowledge the faculty who support KALS. Similarly, TRU should provide retired TRU faculty and staff with opportunities and incentives to continue to contribute to TRU. Supporting seniors who have a wealth of experience and wisdom can not only strengthen us internally but also improve our reputation with the local community. By 2030, administration should act on opportunities for intergenerational learning as well as research collaborations – both of which would nicely complement the current "from the side of our desk" instruction.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my vision of TRU in 2030. I hope at least some of my suggestions come to fruition as TRU strives ahead.

Respectfully,

Ginny Ratsoy

