Memo

Thompson Rivers University
Office of the Associate Vice-President Strategic Enrolment
& University Registrar
Old Main 1637

To: Office of Environment & Sustainability

From: Angelique Saweczko, AVP Strategic Enrolment & University Registrar
Marjorie Budnikas, Manager, Admissions & Advising Open Learning

Re: Sustainability Grant Proposal

Date: November 27, 2013

YouTube Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nl_wnceono&feature=em-share_video_user

Project Description (500 Words)
The Registrar's Office and Open Learning Enrolment Services are looking to move the current paper filing system for student records to an electronic format – the Paperless Registrar's Office Project. We are seeking financial support to purchase three Banner Document Management (BDMS) licenses and four scanners to support this initiative.

License:	$1,700 each = $5,100
Scanners:	$5,000 each + tax = $22,400
Total Request:	**$27,500**

These offices are responsible for all student records. This includes information from the point of application through to convocation. Student files contain significant amounts of paper. Human resources are needed to maintain records, and to share the information with other university departments. Hundreds of square feet of office space are required to store records in perpetuity.

Currently a portion of the student record is maintained electronically through Banner; however, supporting documents such as transcripts from other postsecondary institutions, letters of recommendation, certifications, test results, appeals etc. are stored in a separate paper file for each student. This creates many challenges for the University with respect to document retention protocols, sharing of paper-based information and increased risk of misplaced information. There are several costs associated with paper-based files such as storage, photocopying/scanning documents multiple times and staff resources are often stretched just to maintain and retrieve paper-based student record information.

The volume is quite significant. During an application cycle, the offices process over 100,000 documents. Although not all applicants will become TRU students, we are required to maintain these records for a set period of time. For students who do become TRU students, their file will typically increase by an additional three to five documents per year – approximately 115,000 documents per year. Most documents must be retained in perpetuity, meaning our storage needs will continue to grow.

This project will have meaningful social, ecological and economic benefits to TRU. From a social perspective, this project will change all filing processes within registrarial service areas by eliminating the need for paper files. This will greatly reduce the volume of paper and boxes, storage requirements, physical demands for staff and it will reduce allergens associated with storing paper files. Eliminating paper and dusty storage conditions will assist in creating a healthier environment for staff.

There are two key ecological benefits that will be achieved with this project. The first is a reduction in the amount of paper used and waste generated with paper processes. The second is a reduction in the amount of energy associated with photocopying, scanning documents multiple times and shredding documents within the units and across the University.

There are many benefits associated with this project from an economic perspective. One of the key benefits is improved service to TRU students. Electronic student records will improve the handling and security of student records, allow for more timely retrieval of student information, reduce risks associated with sharing files across campus and regional centres (i.e., confidentiality) and reduce the potential to misplace documents. This will have a positive impact on student interactions.

Additional benefits include improved ability to manage documents as per document retention policies and legislation (FIPPA) and increase document security. This project will also improve efficiencies with the units by reducing staff time needed to file, locate and re-file student information.

Partnerships/People Involved:
Implementation team: Registrar's Office, Open Learning, Graduate Studies and IT Services staff. This team will be responsible for implementing the solution, training staff, developing scanning protocols and workflows and coordinating access permissions.

System users: TRU World, Williams Lake and regional centre staff, Faculty Advisors, Program Advisors, Academic Advisors, Department Chairs, the Centre for Student Engagement, Counselling Services and Career Education. Depending on their role and access requirements, staff will be able to access information they need relating to a student's record to provide better service to students and have immediate access to information.

Student involvement: The units will be hiring students to assist with the implementation and scanning aspects of this project. We will also be seeking student assistance to test student views of information through myTRU (i.e., notification that a document has been received when scanned into the system).

Performance Measures:
Performance will be measured as follows:
- Volume changes in photocopying and associated expenses (reduction)
- Reduced electricity to scan documents several times

- Improved office air quality through the reduction of allergens
- Reduced staff resources required to maintain and share student record information
- Reduced number of documents that go missing which will result in a reduction in the number of requests to students to re-submit documents
- Reduced need for academic units to maintain paper copies of student record information

Level of Impact:
This project will touch all aspects of the university including students, staff and faculty; on-campus and off-campus. Staff and faculty will be able to access student information needed to perform their duties in a timely and efficient manner. There is also a reduced risk to the University with respect to confidentiality as students files will be maintained and shared in a more secure manner. This will also assist the University with FIPPA as it will centralize student information and enable university staff to manage the document retention schedule in a more effective manner and track the information maintained within the student record.

From a student perspective, this project will improve service delivery by reducing the occurrence of missing documents and the resulting need to submit multiple documents. In addition, this project will improve the coordination and communication between campus units with respect to the management of student information.

Linkage to campus planning or other activities:
Academic Strategic Plan
IT Services Strategic Plan
Risk Management

Project Feasibility
There is quite a bit of existing expertise on campus to assist with this project. There are several staff members in the Registrar's Office and Open Learning who have prior experience with document management systems. Also, Open Learning has conducted a small pilot of the solution which has greatly assisted in developing a foundation of knowledge that can be shared across the University.

The implementation of the project is expected to span 18 months. This will allow for the appropriate implementation of the solution and for testing. The goal is to launch the solution at the start of a winter term (i.e., Winter 2015) for all newly admitted students. Students from this point forward will only have electronic files.

A proposed budget is attached. The units will absorb all staffing and training expenses. The request is to obtain funding to support software and hardware needs and will be done in accordance with purchasing guidelines.

A future phase of this project will explore the feasibility of creating electronic files for current and past students.

Educational Opportunities:
This project will require the development of a training program for staff, students and faculty as it will change current workflow processes. It will also require a review of current document retention protocols and the development of scanning protocols. As part of the implementation, a literature review of scanning practices will be conducted along with a survey to identify best practices within the

Canadian postsecondary sector. The research component will be part of the student positions hired to assist with this project. A successful implementation will also provide opportunities to showcase this project at various conferences within BC and across Canada relating to document management and registrarial functions.