

THE OPEN STANDARD

The Newsletter of the Open Learning Division of Thompson Rivers University

Fall Issue

October 2010

Yours Truly

Honesty of new *TRUe Story* advertising campaign aims to inspire.

By Jennifer Read, Director, Marketing and Communications, TRU-OL



Open Learning kicked off its peak September enrolment period with a new ad campaign in hopes of garnering greater awareness and increasing student enrolments.

It is not by chance that the Thompson Rivers University acronym, TRU, lives in the new campaign's headline - *TRUe Story*. The obvious pun, followed by a real student story, aims to resonate with its audience with a simple, focused and emotional appeal: If I can do it, you can too. Credible and compelling stories from real Open Learning students are being used to distil the essence and uniqueness of Open Learning and highlight positive end results. The story-telling approach aims to open up communication with the audience as a dialogue: "Here's my story. What's yours?" It is about people sharing with other people. Similar to what Twitter and Facebook do, *TRUe Story* is simply acting as a conduit for people to get their stories out, essentially making this a campaign written by the people, for the people.

The *TRUe Story* marketing initiative differs from previous years by reaching out to students on a more emotional level. From an advertising perspective, the campaign intends to inspire and build trust.

The marketing idea, however, is rooted in basic knowledge about purchasing decisions. In general, decisions are based on one of two emotional drivers: a want or a need. Whether these make people feel complete, happy, fulfilled, successful or any other combination of feelings, these emotional drivers become the foundation for buying. In regards to what Open Learning offers, some key emotional drivers that reflect our demographic (primarily 25 years and older) include: increased knowledge; self-confidence; financial gain; advancing employment; promotion; and general self-improvement. Telling *TRUe stories* aims to make an emotional connection with potential students, highlight the positive outcomes and in turn, urge them to trust in TRU and themselves and ultimately, enrol.

Another important aspect of the campaign is its diligence in dispelling common myths that may deter people

from enrolling in online or distance education. Myths such as: "online degrees are less credible;" "online credentials are easier to attain than on-campus equivalents;" or "employers and other institutions don't value open institutions." The promotion of *TRUe stories* surrounding online and distance education opportunities dispel other common misunderstandings such as the belief that returning to post-secondary studies means an individual will be unable to fulfill other life commitments or will have to begin their education from scratch. One of the new ads features Morgan Evans, an Open Learning alumnus, who completed his Bachelor of Arts, Psychology through Open Learning and moved on to Medical School at the University of British Columbia. Another ad showcases Meghan Pacheco, a single mother who completed her degree while working full time. Both stories drive the positive message of possibility and opportunity, while breaking down misconceptions about Open Learning.

The scope of the campaign enables the message to stretch far beyond student success stories. *TRUe stories* can be found everywhere and focus on anything from staff and faculty to OL buildings, history, partnerships, programs or any other pertinent piece of information that addresses a need and requires a call to action. The campaign also goes beyond typical media outlets including newspaper, transit advertising, radio and mailers

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THE OPEN STANDARD

Publisher:
Judith Murray

Editor:
Elise Desjardine

Contributors:
Cameron Beddome
Elise Desjardine
Jennifer Read

Kristine Smalcel Pederson
TRU Creative Services

Layout & Design:
Julie Hall

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THOMPSON RIVERS
UNIVERSITY
OPEN LEARNING

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and promotes Open Learning success stories through social media channels and on the Open Learning website, calendar and viewbook.

To help incorporate the new campaign on the website, Open Learning is running a promotion off the homepage (www.truopen.ca) until December 2010. All current Open Learning students and alumni are being asked to submit their personal success story to be eligible to win \$500 off their Open Learning education and be featured in the new *TRUe Story* book, a compilation of inspiring student stories. The objective of the contest is to build up a bank of student success stories that are motivating to individuals who are unsure about returning to school or starting for the first time.

The overall look of the campaign is clean, simple and honest - the exact vein of the message. The stories represent real OL student stories and the photographs are all original. Each ad offers positive reinforcement, encouragement and a clear idea of what a student's end result could be. In a time where education is becoming more of a commodity and consequently advertising is becoming more "salesy," this campaign strives to be different. It provides reprieve in its simplicity and honesty and strengthens the merits of Open Learning as a viable alternative to in-class course-taking. ☞

At Your Service

Open Learning team strives to reach excellence in student experience.

By Kristine Smalcel-Pederson, Director Admissions and Enrolment Services, TRU-OL

Student success is key to the Leadership Team (SELT) representing Service Excellence at Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (TRU-OL); it embodies everything they are working towards.

The Leadership Team (SELT), comprised of leaders from all areas of Open Learning, including OL Faculty Members (see Member list below), recently defined its vision statement:

"The vision of Service Excellence for TRU-OL is to develop and sustain a culture of engagement, integrity and accountability. By providing open access, enterprise, innovation and academic quality, TRU-OL will support student success."

Co-chaired by Valerie Peachey, Director, Program Delivery, TRU-OL, and Kristine Smalcel Pederson, Director, Admissions and Enrolment Services, TRU-OL, SELT works with the hands on, grassroots Service Excellence Team (SET) to ensure best practices and research are upheld at TRU-OL while it also works to create unique standards for open and distance education.

Some current SELT activities include: identifying stakeholders; identifying service excellence benchmarks; discussing topics of concern with OL Faculty Members; supporting and enabling service excellence through new employment positions in Program Delivery and Admissions and Enrolment Services; publishing a link to service standards in more public areas such as the public website pages; and continuing to contribute to ongoing project and process improvement initiatives.

If you would like to discuss these topics or find out how you can contribute to OL Service Excellence, please contact SELT Members. ☞

SELT Members:

Valerie Peachey (Co-chair)

Kristine Smalcel Pederson (Co-chair)

Richard Baldelli

Anne Beveridge

Sandy Beveridge

Liz Brydges

Naomi Cloutier

Donna Daines

Troy Hanschen

Sarah Langlois

Michael Looney

Patricia Neufeld

Rhoda Verduin

Editor's Note

Here comes the drab and dire truth, it is fall. No longer can we look forward to warm, sunny mornings and lazy afternoons lolling on the beach, greatly increasing our Vitamin D stores. However, the fall isn't just about endings; enter a new year of post-secondary studies. Currently, the world of education is itself, entering into new beginnings.

The reality is the face of education is changing. Classrooms from kindergarten onwards are becoming "wired," with computers operating in conjunction with chalkboards. More and more, technology is becoming a staple in the classroom at all levels and more and more, technology is becoming second nature to students connected to a near limitless world of learning and information.

In the post-secondary sector, online learning, spurred by the ever expanding world of

technology, offers a real and revered alternative to in-class studies. The question this raises, as suggested in a *Globe and Mail* column written by Gwyn Morgan, is what does this mean for the future of the formal lecture, the status quo of the post-secondary classroom experience and the professors who guide it?

In his column published in the *Globe and Mail* on October 3, Morgan suggests that the emergence of online learning gives students many alternatives to attending professor performed in-class lectures. He suggests that there is no reason why all written course material can't be delivered by the Internet. While textbooks are still an option for many OL courses, Morgan's suggestion truly encompasses the open learning model. So, while it is possible to eliminate formal lectures altogether, as he proposes, is this the ideal situation for all students?

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Distance and Online Advising

OL joins consortium partners to discuss “fine-tuning” advising teams.

By Kristine Smalcel-Pederson, Director, Admissions and Enrolment Services, TRU-OL

In order to engage and support distance learners, the distance and online advising teams overseeing them must address certain critical areas, according to a group of speakers representing the Canadian Virtual University.

Leena Niemela, Manager, Admissions and Advising, Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (TRU-OL), accepted an invitation from the Canadian Virtual University (CVU) to co-present at the 57th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE) which was held in Fredericton, New Brunswick this June. At the conference, Niemela co-presented with CVU partners Lori Wallace, Dean, Extended Education, University of Manitoba and Karen Wong, Director, Learner Support Services, Athabasca University, on the topic of “Fine-Tuning Distance and Online Advising.”


The panel presented discussions relating three critical areas which must be addressed if distance and online advising units are to successfully engage and support distance learners. Wong provided a demonstration of student tracking software that has enabled advising staff at Athabasca University to maintain consistency in communications with individual students, regardless of when and how the student contacts Athabasca’s advising team. Wallace provided an overview of the University of Manitoba’s business processes and strategies that address the challenges inherent to advising students from all

over the world, with a special focus on students serving in the military.

Niemela discussed the importance of putting together an advising team that is both highly specialized in academic disciplines, but that also addresses the general information needs of all program students. She reviewed the recent successes which TRU-OL’s advisors achieved through a rigorous cross-training exercise that increased the ability of the enrolment service advising and program advising units to work together, and most importantly provide a streamlined, well-informed and personalized experience for Open Learning program students.


“Technology and business processes designed to engage, track and communicate with distance learners are critical tools to a successful distance advising unit; but the people who use those tools, how they work together as a team, are the most important piece in this puzzle,” Niemela summarized.

The presentation and subsequent discussion was well-received at the conference as many Canadian universities are now dealing with distance and online education as a mainstream reality; CVU’s nine Canadian university partners now tally over 100,000 students taking distance or online courses.

For more information about CAUCE please visit <http://cauce-aepuc.ca/default.aspx> and for visit www.cvu-uvc.ca for more information about CVU. 

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As Morgan suggests in his column, which is largely a rant about the efficacy of the role of the campus-based professor at post-secondary institutions, online learning does offer a high-end formal teaching product but it doesn’t deliver teacher-student interaction. For some students who perhaps are not as personally driven and self-motivated as others, contact with their teacher and the merit of being seen in class, as well as the social aspect of in-class attendance, is what keeps them moving along in their post-secondary studies. The reality is online and distance education is a great alternative which offers a quality teaching product that transcends time and space, but this model is not for everyone. Perhaps, as Morgan suggests, the online and distance alternative will spur a competitive response from the traditional model that “will make university life better for both faculty and students.” Or perhaps, it is the marriage of the two modes of learning that will encourage the rise of the engaged learner. The student who both embraces technology and is inspired by the quest for knowledge it evokes, and also poses questions and discussions with the professor who helps them navigate the new information and reason through it.

Now, more than ever, the role of professor and OL Faculty Member is integral to the student experience as they are coming to us full of passion and knowledge. One thing that is certain is that we at Thompson Rivers University are perfectly positioned to tackle the evolution of education head on as we offer both formal on-campus studies and a growing online and distance education offering through Open Learning. 





Success in Stability

Enrolments in Open Learning remain positive for 2010–11.

By Cameron Beddome, Chief Recruitment Officer, TRU-OL

Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (TRU-OL) is slated to continue its enrolment success, according to the *TRU Accountability Report* to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development.

“As TRU-OL reviews the performance measures from 2009-10, and looks ahead to 2010-11, it is confident that its plan for the upcoming year will once again deliver enrolment results that meet the Ministry targets,” the report states.

It may seem that this should be a given considering that Open Learning (OL) exceeded the Ministry target by over 5% last year however, there were a number of key factors that came together that helped OL reach this level. This year, the question is, could it happen again?


The answer is complicated as, unlike a traditional campus that relies on multiple registrations from each individual student, OL must recruit a very high number of new students each year just to match the previous year's results. This is because most students only take one course through OL. The majority of OL course takers only require a single course to aid them in their studies elsewhere and OL is proud to be able to help these students. However, OL cannot completely rely on enrolments through individual course takers alone as the reality is, other institutions will develop new ways to meet the needs of their program students, who are supplementing through OL, and thereby reduce the number of potential OL course taking students.

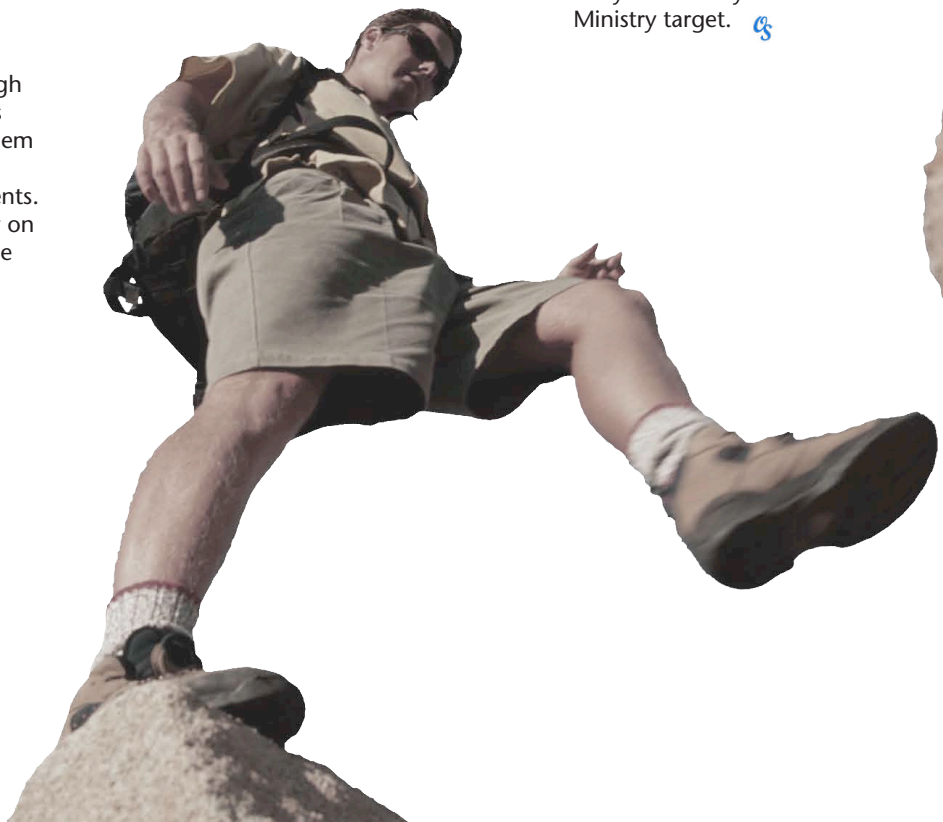
The answer to this issue has traditionally been to enrol more program students (students enrolled in an Open Learning program). These types of students take more courses towards their OL program each year and for years to come. The influence program students can have was evidenced by last year's enrolment results, specifically through two programs. Both the Bachelor of Health Science and the Medical Lab Assistant programs had tremendous enrolments in the prior years and subsequently, ongoing enrolment increased substantially last year. At the time, there was a specific need in the marketplace for Medical Lab Assistant graduates but this demand has since satiated resulting in a reduced number of students interested in the program. Consequently, as of October 2010, OL's ongoing students have dropped by 210 from last year.

Anticipating the reduction in ongoing continuing students, OL developed a recruitment plan to attract additional students. Year-to-date, OL students have increased by approximately 100 over last year, which helps compensate

for the enrolment shortfall from a loss of ongoing students. As of the end of September 2010, the net effect has been close to a 3% increase in enrolments over the previous year.

OL would not have achieved last year's Ministry target without the enrolment activity supported by the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) department. PLAR is a key contributor to the full time enrolment (FTE) numbers reported to the Ministry. This year, OL was off to a slow start issuing PLAR credits; however, a recent surge over the past month has made up some of this ground.

In summary, OL is doing well compared to last year. OL's main objective for 2010-11 is to bring stability to the Division as it completes activities that were started in prior years while achieving the Ministry target. At the midway point of the fiscal year, and thanks to the efforts of the staff and interest shown by its students, OL is in a good position. This position will continue to stay strong provided that focus is maintained as expected FTEs for the year are very close to the Ministry target. 



Return on Investment

Intent to improve his job skills, one OL student returned to education after 15 years.

Time is a terrible thing to waste, especially when that time was spent building an education and gaining valuable work and life experience.

After a number of years of working in an administrative capacity with the local government in Prince George, BC, Keith Meldrum made the decision to go back to school and attain his degree. However, he did not want all that he had learned from his prior education nor that which he'd gained in the 15 years that passed since he'd last been a student, to go unnoticed and unrecognized.

"I did not want to start my post-secondary education all over again," Meldrum said. "Also, I was not willing to forego the two and a half years of post-secondary education I had put into my Engineering diploma."

// The web-based delivery format makes learning and studying very easy and access to the course instructors via TRU email is very good," Meldrum said. "I have found all of the instructors to be very responsive and provide excellent feedback and the online discussion forums provide a good opportunity to interact with my fellow students. //


Meldrum's goal to return to school and gain his degree was further complicated by his busy lifestyle. Married, with a family and working full time as Chief Communications Officer for the Prince George Fire Rescue Service (which means he's on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week), meant traditional campus-based classes were impractical for him. Yet Meldrum was determined to gain a formal education in business management and strengthen his career, so he looked for a program that he could complete via distance and that would recognize his past post-secondary credits.

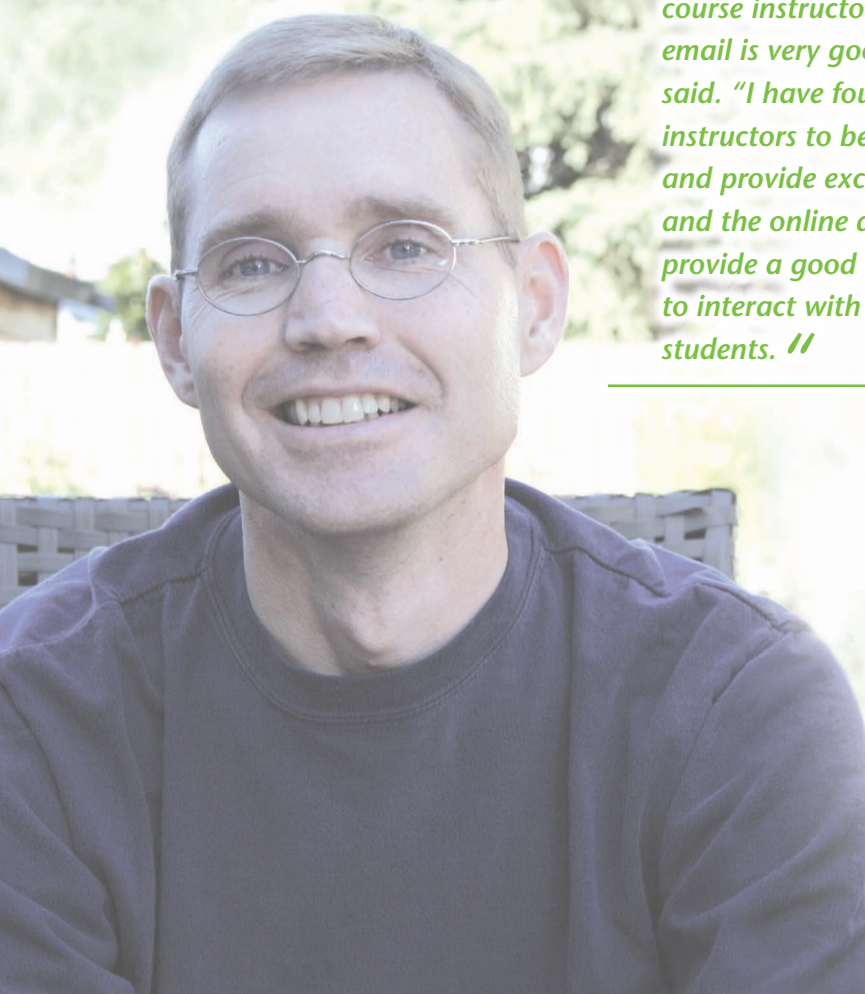
"I learned about Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning's Bachelor of Technology program through a monthly e-newsletter sent out by my professional association - the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC," Meldrum said. "This program was what I was looking for; it would recognize the two years of my Engineering diploma."

While originally unsure if distance learning would work for him, Meldrum found that it best fit his busy lifestyle as it allowed him to begin courses when it was conducive to his schedule and work at his own pace.

"The web-based delivery format makes learning and studying very easy and access to the course instructors via TRU email is very good," Meldrum said. "I have found all of the instructors to be very responsive and provide excellent

feedback and the online discussion forums provide a good opportunity to interact with my fellow students."

"My OL education will make me better at what I do as I have learned skills that I am able to bring to the workplace immediately and as such, find that the education is instantly applicable as compared to theoretical." 



Supplemental Studies

Open Learning helps one OL student fulfill her dream of helping others.

Life is truly a 'choose your own adventure' type journey, often guided by an underlying ethos that will ultimately design an individual's future.

No better is this demonstrated than in Meghan Waters' educational journey.

"Similar to many other young people, I have not always known what I wanted to do or what field I wanted to work in," Waters, a full-time student in her fourth year of Social Work at Thompson Rivers University, explained. "This became a personal challenge for me while attending school."

Waters began her educational adventure at Carleton University in Ottawa where she took Political Science. She then transferred to TRU's Kamloops campus because she wanted to be both closer to her family and because she wasn't sure if the Political Science program was her true calling.

"I believe that the only true happiness in this world is when we give back to others," Waters said, explaining that this ethos is what led her to enrol in the Social Work program at TRU. "Social Work allows me to give to others on a daily basis."

Unfortunately, in order to be accepted into the Social Work program at TRU, Waters needed a specific course which was not offered on-campus when she needed it.

"I enrolled in TRU, Open Learning (TRU-OL) because I needed a course as a prerequisite for the Social Work program at TRU," Waters explained.

"If I had waited until the course was offered on-campus I would have missed the application deadline for TRU's Social Work program. Taking the course through Open Learning allowed me to continue my education at a pace that worked for me."


"I feel very fortunate that TRU-OL offered the course I needed because I might have changed my mind if I had to wait an additional year to be accepted into the program."

While Waters is enrolled in the traditional, on-campus program, she would take more social work courses through Open Learning "in a heartbeat" to fast track her degree.

"TRU-OL is very accessible to on-campus students," she explained. "Teachers and academic advisors often suggest students take online courses to meet degree requirements or to graduate on time. Online courses are great when you have other demands in your life and when typical in-class learning doesn't work with your schedule."

Inspired by the flexibility offered through Open Learning, Waters plans to enrol in TRU-OL's Graduate Certificate in Child and Mental Health program after graduating from TRU's Social Work program.

"The Graduate Certificate program is very appealing to me because the credits can be used towards a Masters program," Waters said. "To me, this sounds like a great thing to do the year after I finish my undergraduate degree because I can work full-time, pay off some debt and also get a head start on my Masters."

But before Waters grows her credentials further, she will complete her Bachelor of Social Work degree while traveling abroad to Chennai, India where she will engage in her final practicum for three months through the Madras Christian School which is partnered with TRU. Waters explained that it was an OL course that contributed to her opportunity to travel to India to finish her fourth year practicum; an experience she hopes will not only expand her worldview but also help her reach her goal of working for the United Nations. 



And the Winner is...

In celebration of TRU's 40 years, OL offered two lucky students a chance to win.

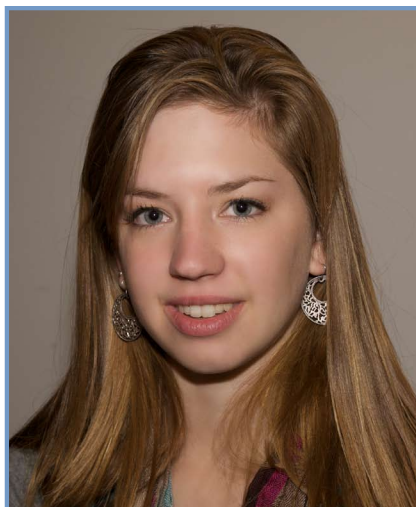
The Open Learning Division of Thompson Rivers University (TRU) marked TRU's 40th Anniversary celebrations, held September 10, by not only providing tours of the British Columbia Centre for Open Learning, but also by offering two lucky winners the chance to gain monetary support towards online and distance education through TRU, Open Learning (TRU-OL).

The grand prize winners, who each won a \$500 certificate towards TRU, Open Learning course registration made prior to March 31, 2012, were TRU students Stacia Woronchak and Irina Khovrichева.

A nursing student at TRU's Kamloops campus, Woronchak has already completed two courses through Open Learning, both of which count towards her nursing credential. Woronchak decided to complete a required English course during the summer through online and distance education in order to increase her marks as well as reduce her stress during the on-campus school year. In addition, she enrolled in the OL course HLTH 291, *Perinatal Nursing: Concepts*, for extra credits. *"Because of taking an extra nursing course in a topic that wasn't covered in depth in the classroom, I will have a greater*


understanding of perinatal nursing which will help with my Registered Nursing exam this year as well as in practice as a nurse," Woronchak said.

Khovrichева, an International student from Russia, has yet to take any courses through Open Learning but plans to enroll in OL courses that will count towards her Post Baccalaureate Diploma in International Business credential.



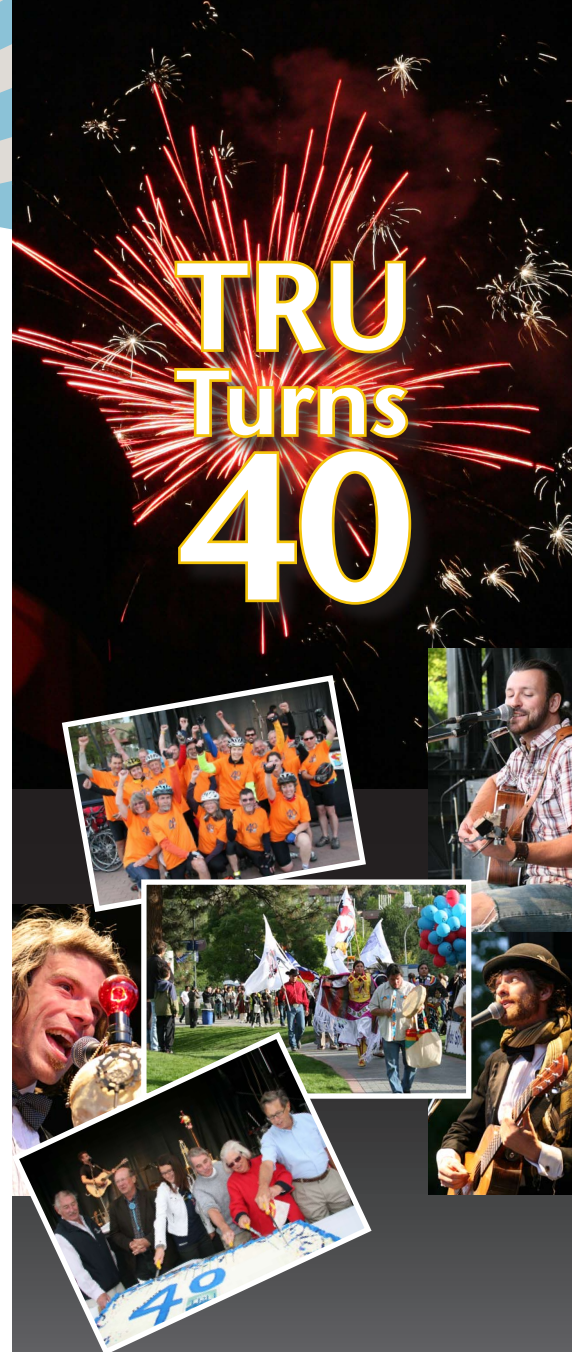
Stacia Woronchak

Currently in her first semester at TRU, Khovrichева believes adding online and distance education to her studies will help her to manage her time.

Congratulations to these two winners who will be adding OL courses to their on-campus studies over the coming years. 



Irina Khovrichева



On September 10, TRU formally celebrated its 40th anniversary with numerous events around campus. From campus tours to musical entertainment from the Kamloops Symphony Orchestra, a family barbecue and a floodlit sky of fireworks, here are some photos highlighting the grandiose event.



Grand Opening


OL opens its doors in Vancouver.



Vancouver is even closer to unlocking the possibilities to education as Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (TRU-OL) is slated to commence operations at its Vancouver Centre. The Grand Opening celebration, which also recognizes TRU's 40th Anniversary, will be held on November 3 from 4 – 6pm in the new office, located at 1030 West Georgia Street, Office 233.

Construction of the office was completed in early September and is now ready for OL Faculty Members and students to utilize. Judith Murray, Vice President, TRU-OL, explained that the Administration always intended to have a Vancouver presence for Open Learning in order to help fulfill its mandate to provide open and distance education to the province of British Columbia.

"The majority of our students and the majority of the Open Learning Faculty reside in the lower mainland," Murray said. "The presence is important to keep TRU-OL top of mind for prospective students from the lower mainland and to best serve the needs of our Open Learning Faculty Members."

The new office will have a limited complement of staff, according to Murray, who will be overseeing the facility which will be used for exam purposes as well as a space for OL staff and OL Faculty Members to conduct meetings and training. TRU-OL's new Vancouver-based office will also provide information and serve the needs of interested public looking for information regarding their options for online and distance education. 

Open Learning
Unlock the possibilities



Welcome the Wiki

New wiki sets OL's internal communications abuzz.



In business, internal communication is a dialogic process between employees and employer and employee and co-workers, according to Management Psychologist Lee Hopkins. Communication, he explains, is a dialogue not a monologue and as such all parties that make up an institution must have a platform for their voices to be heard.

Originally, having identified a need for an effective internal communications medium within the Open Learning Division of Thompson Rivers University, Project Radar was born. This initiative represented the development of an online internal communications tool in the form of an Intranet.

However, as a result of meetings held with each Open Learning (OL) department in 2009 under Project Radar's Internal Communications Consultation Process, the development of an Intranet was deemed impractical.

Inspired by the existing Enrolment Services and Advising Wiki*, developed by Enrolment Services and Advising Assistant Jason Hogue, it was determined that wiki functionality could also provide a cost efficient, scalable and manageable application for OL's Division-wide communication needs.

OL Wiki is a progression or evolution of Project Radar, according to Project Promoter and Interim Manager of OL's Business Metrics Department Rhoda Verduin. Project Radar's objective was to serve as an internal communications medium for OL providing updates on organizational information, Verduin said. The OL Wiki will do much the same as it will allow OL staff and faculty to continuously customize pages and information, including updates and edits.

Moragh Macaulay, Market Research Analyst (Auxiliary) with OL and a driving force behind the Wiki's development, describes the OL Wiki as "an evolution


of the Project Radar concept of an OL intranet, the OL Wiki will provide a secure and open environment for user-generated content that has the technical functionality and ease-of-use to build an interactive, informative and credible repository of institutional knowledge."

"Wikis are easy to use, have search functionality and are scalable in terms of functionality through plug-ins," Macaulay explained. "The Wiki will serve as a democratic, secure and open environment for user-generated content and information sharing and presentation."

Access to the OL Wiki will be available to all OL employees through password protected accounts. Additional security will also be provided by a group settings function, available through the OL Wiki Administration.

While the OL Wiki is still in the building stages, a surplus of important OL information, such as details on the Curriculum Life Cycle, is already available for review, updating and editing. Other information currently published on the Wiki includes: the OL Wiki Manual; OL News and Events; Committees and Meetings; Documents and Forms; Data Surveys and Market Research; and much more department-specific data.

For more information about, or to set up an account, visit OL Wiki <http://olearn.wiki.tru.ca/doku.php?id=TRU-OL> or contact OLwiki@tru.ca.

Please note that training seminars explaining how to use the Wiki are being planned. OL users will be contacted when session dates and times are established. 

OL Wiki Features:

The OL Wiki uses Dokuwiki, an application which has been used to build other wikis at TRU.

Revision control

- Editing toolbar and section editing option
- Editing history (recent changes) tracked and stored and allows for unlimited revisions
- Locking mechanisms to prevent parallel editing of pages

Plug-ins and media

- Plug-ins for Flash, Visio and Tableau reporting dashboards
- Option to upload and embed images and other forms of media


Additional features

- Integrated indexed search function
- Automatic table of contents generation based on heading styles
- Page linking
- Documentation updating in one place rather than across multiple network folders possible

*A wiki is a website that can be directly edited by anyone with editing privileges.



Wiki to Win

Employees of Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning have the chance to win by simply saying what they think or sharing what they know. In order to enter the *Wiki-to-Win* contest, which kicked off October 6 and runs until 4 pm on November 3, OL staff must create a wiki page or section on the OL Wiki that is fun and/or informative. All OL staff are eligible to enter as either an individual or part of a team of up to 15 people. The winning entry, which will be chosen by the Service Excellence Leadership Team, will receive a lunch for their team (of up to 15 people) at Earls Restaurant. The second prize winner, who will receive lunch for two at Earls Restaurant, will be determined by a random draw of all entries. To view contest details including rules and regulations, and to access the contest entry form login to the OL Wiki at <http://olearn.wiki.tru.ca/doku.php>. Questions about the contest can be sent to olwiki@tru.ca. 

Interesting Wiki Facts:

- **Developer:** Ward Cunningham, an American computer programmer and developer of the first wiki, WikiWikiWeb (<http://c2.com/cgi/wiki/>), in Portland, Oregon.
- **First wiki:** WikiWikiWeb, of which programming first began in 1994. It was first installed on the website of Cunningham's software consultancy, Cunningham & Cunningham. WikiWikiWeb was intended as a collaborative database to make the exchange of ideas between programmers easier.
- **Etymology:** Wiki was named by Cunningham after the Hawaiian word for "fast," which is "wiki" (pronounced 'witi or 'viti). Cunningham was first introduced to the word "wiki" when he was told to take the wiki shuttle bus. Originally, Cunningham considered calling the software "quick-web" but instead used the Hawaiian word.
- **Common uses:** project communication; Intranets; and documentation. Companies often use wikis as their sole collaborative software and as a replacement for Intranets, like TRU-OL. Schools and universities often use wikis to enhance group learning.

¹ Extracted from files on wikipedia.org, October 8, 2010.



LIFE in OL

As a result of an agreement made late August of this year between the British Columbia Open Faculty Association and Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning "Tutors" are now referred to as "Open Learning Faculty Members" verbally and in all materials. In addition, the verb "tutor" and its variations are being replaced with the verb "deliver."

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Open Learning recently launched a number of new business programs including the **Certificate in First Nations Applied Economics**, the **Certificate in First Nation Tax Administration** as well as the **Accounting Technician Diploma**. The First Nations Applied Economics program provides key foundational skills and knowledge to assist in the development of a First Nations economic infrastructure and support long term benefits in the development of residential and commercial enterprises on First Nation lands. The Certificate in First Nation Tax Administration program helps First Nations build legal and administrative systems that will reduce business costs on First Nation lands and support competitive market development. The program also helps First Nations implement the new powers and develop the skill set for First Nation tax administration using the *First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act*. The primary goal of the Accounting Technician Diploma is to train accounting technicians, who generally work as supervisors in accounting departments or as para-professionals in public accounting firms.

Open Learning welcomes **Dale Anne Wagner** to her new position as Program Coordinator, Nursing. Wagner, who will continue to work as a faculty member in TRU's School of Nursing, has worked throughout Alberta and BC in a wide range of nursing and educational capacities including both academic and clinical settings. Most recently, she was the year three and four Coordinator for the Bachelor of Nursing Program as well as Co-Chair of the School of Nursing Curriculum Committee. Wagner was one of the course developers for the OL Return to Registered Nursing Practice Certificate.

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Admissions and Enrolment Services would like to welcome **Cathy Morris** who has returned to TRU as an Auxiliary working in various capacities. In addition, the department welcomes **Nicole Borhaven** who is working in an Auxiliary capacity in the Enrolment Services Advisor role. Borhaven has worked within several departments at TRU, including her most recent position with Disability Services. Other changes include the one year leave of Enrolment Services and Advising Assistant **Linda Huntington**, whose position will be temporarily filled by **Ann Scott**.

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The Program Advising team welcomes **Gerry Fink** who is filling in for **Margaret West** until the end of March 2011. West has taken leave from her Program Advisor position to fill a temporary role as OL Audit and Articulation Audit Officer. In addition, **Marianne Dietrich** has taken a permanent role as Program Advisor, Arts and Science.

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The Curriculum Service and Business Information Group welcomes **Andrea Crane** to the position of Project Support Officer. Crane joins OL from her past position as Community Coordinator with the TRU Community office in Ashcroft/Cache Creek. An alumni of TRU, Crane holds a Tourism Management Degree with a major in Entrepreneurship and Management, as well as a Sports Event Management Diploma.

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The Intellectual Property team welcomes **Bonnie Headley** and **Brenda Shandro**. Both Headley and Shandro have taken the positions of Intellectual Property Officers.

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Open Learning bids a fond farewell to **Ethel Enstrom** who, after serving for several years in the Instructional Design department, is now retiring. A retirement party was held on August 25, Enstrom's last day.

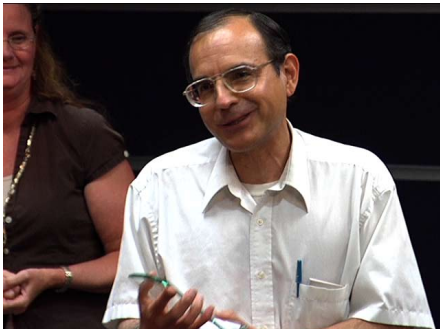
Open Learning acknowledged the most recent winner's of its Outstanding Achievement Awards on August 16. Winners included:



Edie Wan, OL Faculty Member - OL Faculty Member Award



Iain Pardoe, OL Faculty Member - Executive Award



Tony Kuczma, (Supervisor) Program Advisor - Peer-to-Peer Award



Dr. Murray Young, Dean, School of Business and Economics - Non-OL Award

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Dr. Alan Shaver, TRU's new President and Vice-Chancellor (designate) who is slated to take office on December 1, 2010, visited TRU's Kamloops campus in commemoration of the University's 40th Anniversary. Staff and faculty welcomed Dr. Shaver at a meet and greet held September 9 in the Horticulture Gardens.



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Local Kamloops band **Westran**, featuring frontman and Open Learning's very own **Brant Westran**, is set to release its second album *Canadian Made* late October or early November. Westran, Delivery Support Associate, Program Delivery, is not only the band's lead singer, he is also the founder. In 2006, upon returning from a stint teaching English in Japan, Westran began producing his first album along with guitarist Adam Robinson under his own label. New members Aaron Shufletoski, bass, and Len Seefried, drums, will be adding to the melody of Westran's second album.



Brant Westran (second from right)

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Naomi Cloutier took on the role of Acting Director, Business Intelligence and Operations as of September 27, 2010. Cloutier will fill this role until the interview and selection process for the vacant position is complete. Prior to filling the role of Acting Director, Cloutier served as Project Administrator, Curriculum Services. She has worked within Open Learning since it relocated to Kamloops in 2007 in positions including Course Editor. In addition to this change, please note that the portfolio of the Director, Business Intelligence and Operations, has been amended. The Intellectual Property Office will move under the leadership of **Irwin DeVries**, Director, Instructional Design. OL's Business Analysts will move under the leadership of **Sean Templeton**, Project Manager, Business Intelligence and Operations, and the Budget Office will move under the leadership of **Lauren Jenson**, Manager, Business Metrics, Business Intelligence and Operations.

What's NEWS in Open Learning



Athabasca University is hosting an international conference in Banff, Alberta from February 27-March 1, 2011. Papers for the *First International Conference on Learning Analytics and Knowledge 2011* are being accepted until November 1, 2010. The conference will focus on integrating the technical and social/pedagogical dimensions of learning analytics (the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about learners and their contexts for purposes of understanding and optimizing learning and the environments in which it occurs). Keynote speakers include: Barry Wellman, Director of NetLab at the S.D. Clark Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto; Xavier Ochoa, Principal Professor at the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral in Guayaquil, Ecuador; and Erik Duval, Professor in the research unit on hypermedia and databases at the computer science department of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Flanders, Belgium. Visit <https://tekri.athabasca.ca/analytiks> or contact gsiemens@gmail.com for more information.

The number of students enrolled in online and distance learning courses and/or programs is expected to reach over 2.6 million according to the United States Distance Learning Association. It also reports that currently, online distance learning courses represent approximately 10% of the available training. In the U.S. around two-thirds of the largest educational institutions offer online programs. Statistics indicate that most of the students are undergraduates, which signals a continuation of this trend.

Open Learning and new technology were featured topics at an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development conference entitled *Higher Education in a World Changed*

Utterly: Doing More with Less, held in Paris in September. Online education is set to end the model of higher education as a result of "scarcity" of places according to Peter Smith, Senior Vice-President, Academic Strategies and Development, Kaplan Higher Education. Smith said that as a result of growing access to information, the challenge facing universities is "doing more with more." Smith forecasted the end of the traditional university model.

In mid September, the Academic Council of Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) cleared a proposal for the development of a Directorate of Open and Distance Education. K. R. Viswambharan, Vice-Chancellor, KAU, said the distance education mode will benefit some rural youths. "Lessons in practical farming and scientific agricultural practices will be imparted through distance education programs," Viswambharan said.

The UNESCO Chair in e-Learning of the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) has initiated a project devoted to the promotion of Open Educational Resources using an open repository, the institutional Open Access Repository of the University, to collect and centralize key resources about Open Educational Resources. The project, named *MetaOER*, involves the use of web 2.0 collaborative tools such as del.icio.us to provide an effective way to locate, tag and share the original location of existing OER documents available all over the web, facilitating the process of evaluating and adding them to the open repository. The aim being that they will always be available in the same place to the OER community, teachers and other interested parties.

A national award was recently bestowed to authors for their writing on distance education. Peg Wherry, Director, Online

and Distance Learning, Montana State University, Extended University, along with collaborator Deborah Windes of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, recently received the *2010 Elizabeth Powell Award* from the Distance Learning Community of Practice of the University Continuing Association. The Powell award recognizes articles, book chapters or papers published in 2009 that make significant contributions to research in the field of distance education. Wherry and Windes won the award for their chapter "When Distance Technologies Meet the Student Code." The chapter was published in the book, *Cases on Distance Delivery and Learning Outcomes: Emerging Trends and Programs*. The chapter was recognized for its "helpful insights that were informative and served well to remind all that campus policies and procedures are applicable to distance learning."

Abstract submission is open for the *24th International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) World Conference on Open and Distance Learning*. Hosted by Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia, and supported by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia, the 24th ICDE World Conference will be held October 2-5, 2011 in Bali, Indonesia. The conference theme will be "Expanding Horizons – New Approaches to Open and Distance Learning (ODL)", with the following sub-themes: ODL and human capacity building; ODL in a changing world; Quality and ODL - the way forward; Management and strategic development of ODL; Open Educational Resources (OER) in a global world; and International development and distance learning. Eight keynote speeches, 297 paper presentations and approximately 150 posters will be featured at the conference. In addition, the conference includes pre/post-conference

workshops with separate registration and payment. Possible themes of the workshops include 'Best Practices in ICT-based ODL Management' and 'Revisiting Open Educational Resources (OER).' Visit www.ut.ac.id/icde2011/ for more information.

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The *2010 European Distance and E-learning Network (EDEN) Research Workshop*, organized in collaboration with the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), is open for registration. The Workshop will be held October 25-27 in Budapest, Hungary. Keynote speakers include: Professor Gilly Salmon, University of Leicester, UK; Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, UK; Olaf Zawaczki-Richter, Fernuniversität Hagen, Germany; Walter Kugemann, European Foundation for Quality in E-Learning and MENON Network; and Ama Auvinen, CEO, HCI Productions, Finland. Visit www.eden-online.org/eden.php for more information.

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The *2010 International Distance Education Advanced Forum*, held October 10-11, explored new missions, opportunities and challenges to distance education in future development. It provides an opportunity for in-depth discussions on the status quo and the latest theories of distance education in higher education, career training, basic education, community and rural education. Examining distance education practice and showcasing the latest research results, the Forum promotes academic innovation and practical development of distance education. The Forum is lead by the China Committee of Open and Distance Education (CCODE) and is co-hosted by Peking University and the Open University United Kingdom. Visit www.ideaforum.com.cn/English/ for more information.

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The *Seventh Annual Open Education Conference*, held November 2-4 in Barcelona, Spain, serves as a venue for research related to open education. This year represents the first time the conference will convene outside of

North America. The conference theme for 2010 is Open Educational Resources: Impact and Sustainability. Keynote speakers include: Gajaraj Dhanarajan, former Vice Chancellor of Wawasan Open University, Malaysia; Brenda Gourley, former Vice Chancellor of The Open University, UK; Erik Duval, Professor of Computer Science at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium; and Raquel Xalabarder, Director of Learning Resources at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain. Visit <http://openedconference.org/2010/> for more information.

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The Commonwealth of Learning's biennial *Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning*, in partnership with Indira Gandhi National Open University, will be held November 24-28 in Kochi, Kerala, India. The Forum brings together over 70 countries to explore applications of open and distance learning in widening educational access, bridging the digital divide and advancing the social and economic development of communities and nations at large. Visit www.pcf6.net/pages/ for more information.

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The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) plans to offer a certificate program in English through Nokia phone's Ovi Life Tools in order to integrate modern technology into distance education. IGNOU entered into a strategic collaboration agreement with Nokia to provide the program, which will be in functional English provided mainly through SMS. The six-month program will begin in January 2011 and will be divided in three levels - English in daily life, English in education and joining the workforce.

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A measure seeking to develop better distance education programs has been filed at the House of Representatives in the Philippines. Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara filed House Bill 400 directing all education agencies to conduct an evaluation to better integrate distance education programs into the national policy and enable the

Congress to enact more pro-education legislation. "With the advent of the information age through the World Wide Web, distance education program can be a valuable tool in reaching out to the areas which do not have access to the school campuses," Angara said in a statement. He said the report will also identify the elements by which the quality of distance education, as compared to campus-based education can be assessed, including elements such as subject matter, interactivity and student outputs. These elements also include access to higher education, job placement rate, undergraduate and graduate rates, and professional degree attainment rates and identification of the types of students.

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Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh is preparing to launch an educational television channel that aims at telecasting lectures to students of distance education according to the University's President Suleiman Abalkhail. During the trial run, the channel will telecast a number of programs through the Internet. The Cabinet recently approved the rules and regulations for educational TV channels.

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Kenya is working towards establishing an Open University that will exclusively allow students to study online. It is scheduled to be in place next year, Higher Education Minister William Ruto said. "Under this program, we want to ensure that students who want to join university for courses that do not require much contact between the lecturers and the students can learn through an Open University process," he said. The project is expected to break new ground and help the Government handle rising demand for higher education in the next decade. If successful, the University should allow the intake of at least 40,000 extra students. The Open University is one in a raft of strategies being pushed by the Government to improve access to higher education. 