



ALBERTA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFER

February 1, 2005

Taylor University College and Seminary, Edmonton

Present: Lucille Walter (Chair), Vance MacNichol, Brian Larson, Irene Langille (for Gord Nixon), Kaley Williams, Ed Behnke, Fred Carnew, Catherine Eddy, Gretchen Hess, Elaine Wong (for Peggy Patterson), Dietmar Kennepohl, Michael Bosch, Marilyn Patton (Executive Officer), Guy Germain (Manager), Kyra Kubrak (Research Assistant)

Absent: Doug Hart, Gord Nixon, Peggy Patterson

1. Welcome

The chair welcomed Council to the second meeting of 2004-05.

- Introduced new member Brian Larson, Executive VP Academic & Student Services, Lakeland College
- Introduced Dr. David Williams, Vice-President Academic of Taylor University College who gave Council an overview of Taylor University College (TUC) and its programs; and Craig Weston, Registrar and ACAT Contact Person

2. Minutes

Moved and seconded that the minutes of 13 October 2004 be adopted.

CARRIED

3. ACAT Chair and Secretariat Report

Chair's Report:

- Met with Advanced Education Minister Hancock, his Executive Assistant BettyAnn Hicks and ADM Phil Gougeon on January 18, 2005
 - Minister excited by portfolio, "wants access for every qualified student"
 - Discussed the vision and future of ACAT and how it can support the Minister's vision for the department
 - Another meeting with minister scheduled for Feb 28
- On agenda for SAO group April 1, looking for feedback about what ACAT does and where we're going
- Hoping to meet soon with university VPAs
- Will be getting back to institution visits
- Invited to Building Tomorrow Today conference in late April

Secretariat report

- Contract projects: Best Practices in Credit Transfer and Best Practices in PLAR
 - Advisory Committee meetings in conjunction with both projects
 - Excellent research contractors
 - Best practice in transfer advice has never been recorded and will be a valuable resource
- eCampusAlberta now has links to ACAT public site

- The data highlights agreements that are not in ATG and will help encourage colleges and technical institutes to formalize agreements
- Revamped ACAT public web site up and running
- Work is proceeding on revising the Transfer Guide based on feedback from the focus group of Contact Persons
 - Easier to read for students and advisors
 - Additional feedback will be requested from focus groups of Contact Persons, advisors and students
- IQAS Initiative to create an International Credentials Database Repository: a collaborative initiative with post-secondary institutions in Alberta and Saskatchewan to develop a common repository of information related to international credentials.
 - Discussion followed on
 - which institutions use IQAS for employees?
 - which are trying to create a database for student credit transfer?
 - is this duplicating other databases already in existence?
 - IQAS data and ACAT data being completely different
 - IQAS data does not help at the course level which is what post-secondary institutions want
 - concern raised about the cost of the initiative?
 - AU contracts with IQAS, finds it helpful; by course data base would be cumbersome; might be useful for universities to share information about how a particular credential had been accepted
 - Chair commented that membership in the European Union requires countries to ensure transferability among their universities – no data base, just mutual acceptance
 - IQAS is interested in collectively using expertise to develop a database of education systems, so that institutions would fully understand how education works in other countries.
 - Unclear how much of the work would be done by IQAS, how much by institutions
 - Another member pointed out that there is such information on the UNESCO website
 - Another asked if IQAS would take on assessment of high school credentials, which is now done by individual institutions and high schools
 - A suggestion was made to have someone from IQAS come to the next meeting

4. Admission to the Transfer System – Private Degree Granting Institutions

- Reviewed how institutions historically have become part of the ATG and transfer system
- Alberta now has the Campus Alberta Quality Council that has a rigorous process to review proposed new degree programs. This is followed by a recommendation to the Minister.
- ACAT should be encouraging institutional involvement in transfer system, not putting up barriers. If an institution has been approved to offer degrees, the Chair and secretariat recommend that it should be automatically admitted to the transfer system (without having to request it of ACAT).
- Member institutions want institutions whose programs have been approved to be able to submit transfer credit proposal forms electronically.

Moved and seconded that ACAT agree to accept for admission to the Alberta Transfer System any Alberta private degree-granting institution that has, on the recommendation of the Campus Alberta Quality Council, or its predecessor, the Private Colleges Accreditation Board, been authorized by the province of Alberta to offer a degree program(s). It is expected:

- *that the private institution will adopt and abide by the Principles, Policies and Procedures of ACAT and name a Contact Person,*
- *that the private institution will work to establish transfer agreements with other members of the transfer system, and*
- *that ACAT will record in its transfer agreements database and Transfer Guide only those agreements involving the degree programs that the private institution is authorized to offer by the province of Alberta*

Discussion

- The reference to PCAB in the motion should be removed, that this motion should address Alberta's change to the Campus Alberta Quality Council as the new quality assurance body
- Reference to PCAB, gives historical context
- Remove reference to PCAB, and use second motion to grandfather programs previously approved by it.
- Clarify bullet 3 for receiving institutions

MOTION DEFEATED

Moved and seconded that:

ACAT agrees to accept for admission to the Alberta Transfer System any Alberta private degree-granting institution that has, on the recommendation of the Campus Alberta Quality Council, been authorized by the province of Alberta to offer a degree program(s). It is expected:

- *that the private institution will adopt and abide by the Principles, Policies and Procedures of ACAT and name a Contact Person,*
- *that the private institution will work to establish transfer agreements with other members of the transfer system, and*
- *with respect to those agreements wherein the private institution acts as a receiving institution, that ACAT will record in its transfer agreements database and Transfer Guide only those agreements involving the degree programs that the private institution is authorized to offer by the province of Alberta. (This does not preclude the possibility of recording agreements involving other courses or programs that the private institution successfully negotiates as a sending institution with another Alberta transfer system member.)*

CARRIED

- Moved and seconded that the membership of those private institutions which have been granted approval to offer degrees through the PCAB process be grandfathered.

CARRIED

5. Commission on Learning recommendation

- In 2003, Alberta's Commission on Learning proposed that as part of an overall review of the post-secondary education system, ACAT should undertake a thorough review of admission policies at all post-secondary institutions."

ACAT's 2004-07 Business Plan addresses this recommendation in Strategy 1C:

Strategy 1C – Explore the feasibility of compiling system-wide admissions policies and criteria, as referenced in the Learning Commission report, and disseminate to students.

- Commission wording – thorough “review” versus ACAT business plan wording – “compiling”

- Why the word 'compilation'?
 - No less difficult for students to read a compilation
 - Who would be responsible for its accuracy?
- Chair's recommendation that ACAT remove 'compilation' from business plan
- Discussion on the meaning of 'review'
- ACAT, given it's impartial role, could call a forum of representatives from various sectors to facilitate a discussion on how admissions policies are stated and formatted:
 - Similarities might be similarly stated – a recommendation of the subcommittee on Admissions from the Minister's Working Group (MWG) on which no action has been taken
 - Encourage a common language to support the Campus Alberta concept
 - Should we strike a sub-committee to set terms of reference, goals and objectives
- Suggestions made on composition of subcommittee on admissions
 - Contact Persons from more than one type of institution
- Map out 5-yr timeline
- Such a review is supportive of the Campus Alberta Learning perspective
- Useful process model might be that which was used in the adoption of the common 4-point grading system

6. 2001-02 Graduate Satisfaction Survey presentation and

7. Transfer credit experiences of post-secondary graduates from the class of 2001/02 report

Tracey O'Reilly, Research and Policy Analyst, Alberta Advanced Education presented highlights from the report on *Transfer Credit Experiences of Post-Secondary Graduates from the Class of 2001-02*, which was a study of a subset from the *Survey of the Class of 2001-2002*. Her presentation was followed by further analysis of the results by Guy Germain, Manager, Policy and Planning, ACAT.

- Conducted over 2 months in 2004 of the 02 grad class
- Online survey new this year
- Graduates of universities have lower satisfaction with quality of teaching
- Higher percentage of women attending post-secondary education, a trend not only in Alberta, but also happening across Canada
- Students' accessing sources of information: calendar rated high for *transfer* students
- Report should be public February 25 – ACAT send link to Council
- Next steps
 - Planning for next survey starting soon,
 - Field testing in spring 2006
 - Getting input from institutions re process etc- what went right, what went wrong
 - Won't be wholesale changes to keep consistency

Comments from members:

- Maybe ACAT should work towards having own survey
- Appreciate analysis of data by ACAT
- Consider doing a focus group instead of a survey, wouldn't get quantity but may get better quality

8. ACAT Business Plan 2005-2008

- Rolling plan, to be presented for final approval at May 25 meeting

Past Initiatives that could be removed from the business plan:

- 1D Electronic application service: change to “support the concept of electronic application service”

New Initiatives that have been suggested and could be added to the business plan

- Need to add an admissions initiative framed around Campus Alberta as a strategic priority
- Include Minister’s vision of “Access for all qualified students”
- Re-word vision statement to include “to facilitate Campus Alberta”
- Look at Strategic Priorities closely – include new admissions focus, capable of looking at all issues dealing with transfer
- Add national and international to priorities
- Review of the common Grading system:
 - CPs need to be asked about impact of grading or is it an academic issue
 - ACAT to strike a committee to review impact of grading system
 - Fit better with Terms of Reference

Council members were encouraged to study the Business Plan and forward to the Secretariat any further suggestions.

9. Transfer Patterns Study

Highlights from the 2004 Fall report

Within Province Transfer

- The total number of full- and part-time students transferring to Alberta universities decreased by 1%, from 4,953 students in 2003 to 4,905 in 2004. However, transfers to universities increased from public colleges and private colleges offering accredited degrees.
- Despite losing one college, the total number of full- and part-time students transferring to Alberta public colleges increased by 3.3%, from 3,076 students in 2003 to 3,177 in 2004.
- Once again, the top sending institution for 2004 is Grant MacEwan College, with 1,731 students transferring out (decrease from last year). Of the top 10 sending institutions, only NAIT sent more students in 2004 than it did in 2003.
- U of A maintained its place as the top receiving institution with 2,608 students transferring there. While increases were experienced at U of A (+119 students), U of L (+37) and AU (+2), U of C admitted 206 fewer transfer students in 2004.

Into Province Transfer

- The total number of full- and part-time students transferring into the province increased by 10.8%, from 4,071 in 2003 to 4,512 in 2004. Fewer students transferred from post-secondary institutions outside the province to all sectors except to public colleges.

Within and Into Province Transfer

- The total number of full- and part-time students transferring within and into the province increased by 3.4%, from 13,898 in 2003 to 14,377 in 2004.
- The public college sector was the only sector that experienced increases in transfer students both from institutions in Alberta as well as from those in other jurisdictions.

The *Transfer Patterns Fall 2004, Mobility Tables* and the *Transfer Patterns Studies 1979 – 2004 Extracts by Sector* will be distributed.

10. ACAT Terms of Reference

Further to a recommendation made at the last meeting of ACAT:

- Need to strike a sub-committee to review the Terms of Reference (established in 1975)
- Members suggested a small group, having good sector representation, which would meet by teleconference.
- Dietmar Kennepohl and Catherine Eddy volunteered. Brian Larson, Vance MacNichol and Gord Nixon were suggested to round out the sector representation.

11. Second to post-secondary Articulation

Science:

- Science Report has been circulated to Vice-Presidents (Academic) with the recommendation put forward by the Articulation Committee that the revised Science courses be accepted in the same manner as their predecessors.
- Post-secondary institutions were asked to respond to the recommendations and submit appropriate advising charts for students indicating the pathways a student might follow from the revised science courses to post-secondary programs at their institutions. A response was requested by the end of February 2005.

Social Studies

- Social Studies Articulation Committee meeting is to take place this spring.
- The implementation schedule for Social Studies has been delayed.
- The plan is to have a report containing the Committee's recommendations ready for sending to post-secondary institutions in 2005. The provincial implementation of Social Studies 10-1 and 10-2 is currently planned for 2007, Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 in 2008, and Social Studies 30-1 and 30-2 in 2009.

Mathematics:

- Alberta Education, in conjunction with its Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP) partners (British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Nunavut Territory) is revising the K to Grade 12 Mathematics Common Curriculum Framework.
- Revisions to the K to Grade 9 portion have begun and revisions to the Grades 10 to 12 portion will begin in fall 2005.
- WNCP partners have been seeking input from post-secondary institutions in each province or territory with respect to the mathematical skills and competencies necessary for students to make a smooth transition from secondary math studies to post-secondary programs.
- A series of face-to-face meetings with officials from each of Alberta's post-secondary institutions has taken place.
- Comments/Questions
 - With all the consultation that is being done at the front end, will an ACAT articulation sub-committee be necessary?
 - Does the review include Math 31? Response: No

12. Alberta Transfer Guide

The Alberta Transfer Guide is being developed for 2005-2006. In response to requests from Contact Persons and their Assistants, the Transfer Guide Production process has been reviewed and updated by the Secretariat. Members were given an outline of the process for *2005-2006 Alberta Transfer Guide*.

13. Roundtable

UofA:

- UofA grading: withdrawal appears as an F on transcripts, had high number of Fs; grade distribution issues, GPAs too low; grade of 1.8 for Satisfactory standing; not as many people in first-class standing; many faculties would like 'D' to mean that the course must be repeated with D being a pass for an optional course, but necessitating repeat for other courses (e.g. repeat CHEM 101 before going on to CHEM 102)
- Comments from members
 - One institution has smaller scale; being more flexible at Christmas with students who get a 1.7, must bring it up to 2.0; first year at CUCA with 2.0 as acceptable GPA; pulling student averages down, not a bad thing at the top end, trying to get a sense of the bottom end; D or D+ is acceptable for a grade of the course, to be used as a prerequisite must be C-; have not discussed WFs
 - Another institution has not so much scale, worked with faculty at program level – how they would evaluate courses with a new scale – when would I assign a D, C, etc.
 - How do students perceive the outcomes of the grading system?
- Reported on the hiring of a new President

UofC

- Submitted a memo regarding a survey of first year undergrad students conducted by Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium in 2004
- Campus Calgary
 - Put on record we are all prepared to grow, take more students providing there is funding in place
 - Is a response to Campus Alberta concept
 - Perception that post-secondary institutions in Edmonton work more collaboratively than Calgary counterparts
 - Urban campus – UofC lead
 - Expansion of Bow Valley
 - Health Tech learning institute
- Comments from members:
 - Will three private university colleges become involved in CC?
 - AU and UofL have offices in Calgary as well

ACTISEC Member

- partnership between ACTISEC and CAUS still working
- worked hard during provincial election to get message out about tuition
- tuition and fees consultation across province; 2 or 3 colleges recommended to wait for predication of what tuition dollars will be

Portage

- funding is down
- Aboriginal initiatives and funding needs long term plan

Public Member

- Tremendous need for technically trained people in the workforce; process in place in petroleum industry bringing in people from South America, looking for private training groups (training and development)
- Aboriginals largest untapped workforce in country; frustrating that there is no focused approach to developing that workforce

SAIT

- SAIT strategies moving forward, referring to self as SAIT Poly-Technic
- Looking at 3 areas to offer degree programs – help diploma grads earn baccalaureate degrees

Secondary Member

- Need to bring back Transitional Mathematics 101; will ACAT agreement still hold?

Concordia

- Private university colleges getting a sense of what are the changes with CAQC re reporting; same in some ways;
- Focus on second language in schools having impact on elementary education programs

U of C

- Dr. Patterson completes term
- Cathleen Massey new Assistant VP, replaced Executive director of Enrolment Management
- Second round of competitive admissions, determined to keep enrolments at 2002 levels; down 1000 in 2003; 97% cap in September
- introduced Academic Admissions merit award \$500
- appointed a university veterinarian; no info on admissions; advising students to apply to faculty of science; anticipate requirements will be same as Saskatchewan

Athabasca University

- new president this summer
- PLAR; internal debate about PLAR; push by the federal government for PLAR, especially foreign PLAR; thin on expertise of PLAR; would like to see Alberta standards
- AU looking at what other post-secondary institutions are doing before they make any plans

Member from CAUS

Bill One

- Pushing 3 points – more technical people; diversify economy; cultural contribution
- What kind of recommendations would a body like ACAT make towards Bill One?
- Has ACAT been approached
- Chairs of ACAT and CAQC have had meetings with the minister
- Chair will write a “visioning document” based on today’s discussions and send to Minister’s Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next meeting is to be held on May 25, 2005, at the University of Lethbridge.