

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

ACAT Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2009
Alumni House, University of Alberta, Edmonton

Present: Ron Woodward (Chair), Anna Kae Todd, Fred Carnew, Catherine Eddy, Peter Haney, Olive Yonge, Susan Radke on behalf of Gordon Nixon, Ann Tierney, Dietmar Kennepohl, Larry Hlushak, Robin Fisher, Bert Seinen (Executive Director, Campus Alberta Partnerships), Janice Park (ACAT Director), Eric Dohei (ACAT Manager),

Absent: Alastair MacKinnon, Alice Wainwright-Stewart, Gord Nixon, Vincent Steinhauer

Guests: Connie Harrison (ADM Post Secondary Excellence), Wesley Oginski (Alberta Education), Geoffrey Tate (ASEC), Dr. Karen McDaniel (Articulation Coordinator, Academic Development, SAIT Polytechnic), Sonia Jevne (PLAR Manager, ACAT Secretariat)

Recorder: Wendy Pruden (ACAT Administrative Assistant)

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Ron Woodward provided opening remarks and requested round-table introductions (Mr. Wesley Oginski, Alberta Education representative and Mr. Geoffrey Tate student representative were attending their inaugural meeting).
- Dr. Carl Amrhein provided opening remarks on behalf of the University of Alberta. Highlights include:
 - Views ACAT as a significant achievement which provides an example of and defines the emerging concept of Campus Alberta.
 - ACAT's success stems from:
 - Voluntary membership – post-secondary institutions choose to work collaboratively.
 - ACAT respects autonomy of post-secondary institutions
 - Works to the best interests of students
 - At UofA and UofC, 42% of first time registrations come through the transfer system.
 - ACAT Chair thanked Dr. Amrhein for his opening remarks, support and advocacy with regard to ACAT.

2. Chair's report – Ron Woodward

- Since the May Council meeting he has been busy continuing the institution site visits and addressing a variety of ACAT issues/initiatives. Details will be discussed over the course of today's agenda.

3. Decision Items

a) ACAT Governance Model

The ACAT Governance Model was approved at the February 2009 meeting. However, ACAT's university sector representatives as well as the student representative from the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) voted against approval of this model at that time, citing the potential impact that the Campus Alberta administrative structure could have on the mandate and role of ACAT and the desire to consult further with the AUA on the model. As there are new members on Council, the background, including the impact of the Campus Alberta Administration (CAA) concept on the ACAT Governance Model, was reviewed.

b) Mandate and Roles Draft Document

The Mandate and Roles document was drafted to meet the requirements of the government legislation, *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act (APAGA)*. The document reflects the mandate of the agency, the roles of government and the agency and the accountability chain. The Mandate and Roles document is to be signed off by the ACAT Chair and the Minister by December 31, 2009. However, more time may be required to review and finalize. The legislation is to be enacted in early 2010.

c) Code of Conduct Draft Document

- The Code of Conduct reflects the requirements under the APAGA requiring Public Agencies to have a Code of Conduct document signed off by the ACAT Chair and Minister by December 31, 2009. However, more time may be required to review and finalize.

Discussion

- It was expressed that all four research intensive universities need to be represented by Council under the new governance model.
- The Council requested that the Governance Model, the Mandate and Roles and the Code of Conduct documents be reviewed and revised to incorporate not only the legislative components required but to more clearly reflect the work and spirit of ACAT, specifically:
 - That the governance model address the representation of the four research intensive universities.
 - The unique values, roles, and principles of ACAT.
 - ACAT facilitates collaboration and cooperation between member institutions
 - ACAT and Alberta's Transfer System is learner centric.
- A Governance Subcommittee was struck to review and revise the documents. The sub-committee is to report back to Council at the February 2010 meeting. Subcommittee members include: Ann Tierney, Peter Haney, Catherine Eddy, Anna Kae Todd or Robin Fisher, Larry Hlushak.

- For any additional input Council members are requested to email their comments to Janice Park, Director, ACAT Secretariat.

Bert Seinen invited representatives from the ACAT Council to meet with the CAA Interim Group. The date of the next meeting will be provided to the ACAT Chair.

d) Policies, Principles and Procedures (PPP) – Arbitration Issue

- Council reviewed whether its' role as an arbitrator. In addition to Council feedback, input received from the Government of Alberta Legislative Services advised that ACAT does not have the authority to act as an arbitrator. Council to determine whether D 6 in the Procedures section of the PPP should be removed.

MOTION: *moved by Dietmar Kennepohl, seconded by Ann Tierney, that document Item D6 on page 7 of the Policies, Principles and Procedures document, referring to arbitration, be removed.*

CARRIED

e) Draft ACAT Business Plan for 2009 – 2012

- The draft was reviewed and requested revisions noted. The finalized business plan will be posted on the ACAT website when the revisions have been updated.
- Anna-Kae Todd advised Council that at the Senior Academic Officer meeting, there did not seem to be a clear understanding of ACAT and the existence of a transfer system. It is requested that the ACAT Business Plan be expanded to enhance the communication component of its core business. The goal of the enhanced communication would be to increase awareness of ACAT's role and purpose within the post-secondary system including among member institutions.

MOTION: *moved by Anna Kae Todd, seconded by Dietmar Kennepohl, that the 2009-2012 ACAT Business Plan be approved with the identified revisions.*

CARRIED

f) "Letters in Good Standing" Schedule (2010)

- After discussion, Council determined that the letters in good standing 2010 will be sent out after the full school term (September).

4. Discussion Items

a) Instructor Qualifications for Degree Transfer – Draft Policy

- After discussion the Council determined that rather than adopting a policy, what is required is a principles and best practice document, including resources available at other institutions to assist when an institution experiences difficulty hiring appropriate faculty.

- As a first step Council requested the Secretariat develop an inventory of current Instructor Qualifications policies from institutions and other jurisdictions as well as compiling scenarios they have encountered where instructor qualifications presented a barrier to the establishment of a transfer agreement.
- b) PLAR Presentation by Sonia Jevne
- The PowerPoint presentation was delivered.
 - The results of an environmental scan were discussed and the Report on Institution Visits, October 2009, was handed out. It will be available on the transferalberta.ca website in December 2009.
 - The PLAR professional development training schedule is being finalized and institutions will be notified when applications can be submitted.
 - A PLAR Stakeholder Committee is being established.
 - One of the many issues that will need to be addressed includes the development of standardized terminology and definitions for PLAR and related terms across Alberta.
 - Ms. Jevne will attend the CAPLA Conference in Toronto November, 2009 and will represent Alberta on the Pan-Canadian Strategic Advisory Panel for Recognition of Prior Learning.
- c) Learning Outcomes
- i) COPENHAGEN – Karen MacDaniel, SAIT
- A copy of the PowerPoint presentation and a recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) document were distributed.
 - ECVET belongs to a series of initiatives to recognize learning experiences across different countries and types of institutions including:
 - European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) – makes teaching and learning more transparent and facilitates the recognition of formal, non-formal and informal studies;
 - EUROPASS –diploma supplement, and certificate supplement which explains the certifications in terms of competencies so employers can understand what the employee can do;
 - European Quality Charter for Mobility (EQCM) – provides a framework for the free movement of persons in the field of education and training like study/stays abroad;
 - European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) for ECVET which acts as a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe promoting mobility and lifelong learning.
 - Education is viewed as a currency. The goal is to make vocational training easily understood by employers. Achieving this will assist in developing a European labour force with this skilled workforce becoming the common *currency* throughout Europe.

Council requested that Copenhagen, like Bologna, become a standing agenda item.

- ii) BOLOGNA – Olive Yonge, University of Alberta
 - An update was provided to Council. Bologna as a concept is being discussed in a variety of forums including as a standing item at Council meeting. An awareness of Bologna has been established; the next step is to ensure the post secondary systems, including agencies like ACAT, prepare to incorporate the Bologna's ideas and principles. Institutions will have to work toward preparing staff and adopt policies and processes that support learning outcomes.
 - ACAT Council members are invited to attend the Science 100 session at the UofA to see Bologna in action. Please contact Olive Yonge if you are interested.

5. Discussion Items

a) Articulation Sub-committee

- The Articulation Sub-committee has met and reviewed:
 - the history of articulation committees in Alberta including what has been successful,
 - the BCCAT model
 - the criteria for determining what disciplines should have articulation committees.
- The Sub-committee is looking at how to identify the need for and establish articulation committees. Consideration is being given to the goals of the individual articulation committees, who should be represented, recruitment of committee chairs and the role of the Secretariat.
- An effort is being made to have articulation committees operate as independently from the ACAT Secretariat as possible given the Secretariat's limited resources.
- The Secretariat role would include assisting in establishing the articulation committee and convening the inaugural meeting. The Committees will meet on an annual basis keeping the Secretariat apprised by providing meeting minutes and identifying issues to be addressed by Council. The Secretariat will ensure the minutes and issues identified are presented to Council.
- The Articulation Sub-committee will establish a general framework to define what an articulation committee is and their general terms of reference that can be modified to meet the specific need of the articulation committee being created. The Articulation Sub-committee will guide, assist, and monitor the effectiveness and necessity of the articulation committee.
- A recommendation was made to have the Sub-committee be a standing committee that meets as necessary.

- This Sub-committee will report its progress and proposed plan to Council at the February 2010 meeting.

a.i) Nursing Task Group

- This was created as a task group, rather than an articulation committee, to provide recommendations to the Minister addressing transferability issues related to registered nurse to registered nurse degree programs and licensed practical nursing diploma to registered nurse degree programs.
- Olive Yonge is the Task Group Chair. The remainder of the group is comprised of a variety of institutional nursing educators and nursing professional association representatives. The first meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2009.
- The task groups' role is to determine if there is a problem and, using a collaborative process, determine some workable solutions. Recommendations are to be developed by the group.
- The Senior Academic Officers (SAO) had a meeting last week and requested a SAO representative sit on this group.

a.ii) Engineering Technology Task Group

- This task group was created, at the request of the Minister, to provide recommendations to address transfer issues related to transfer from engineering technology diploma programs to engineering degree programs.
- A letter from the ACAT Chair, requesting they co-lead this task group, was sent to the Deans of Engineering at the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary.
- An engineering articulation committee currently exists to address transfer issues between degree granting institutions and institutions that provide university transfer programs. It may be determined that this committee should broaden their mandate to address this issue.

Both these task groups are expected to report to Council at the February 2010 meeting with recommendations to present to the Minister.

b) Columbia College Interest in Membership

- The only private-for-profit ACAT member institution is DeVry. DeVry became a member prior to the current policy being approved and was grandfathered to remain in the system.
- After lengthy discussion it was determined that the Chair will contact the Council members requesting their input prior to discussing further with Columbia College.
- Columbia College currently is able and does have transfer agreements in place, and students receive transfer credit, but Columbia is not a member of ACAT.
- ACAT Secretariat will research history further and provide background material for Council.

6. Information Items

- a) Taylor College and Seminary
 - Have streamlined their offerings and continue to be part of the Alberta Transfer System as a sender to a number of degree granting institutions.
 - There were no questions at this time.

- b) BC Policy Implementation
 - The Alberta/BC Policy communication is being sent to the institutions tomorrow. BCCAT sent their communication piece out Oct. 27, 2009.
 - Thompson Rivers Open Learning University has contacted ACAT to see how to apply for membership. Once the application is received, a volunteer committee will be created to review the application and provide a recommendation to Council.

- c) PCCAT Research Subcommittee
 - The project is looking at student mobility across jurisdictions. The University of Alberta is participating; other schools include the University of British Columbia, the University of Saskatchewan and York University. The Universities of New Brunswick and Dalhousie may take part at a later date.
 - The project coordinator, Nick Heath, will work with the institutions involved the project.
 - Individual institution reports are being developed as well as a National report. The National report will be vetted through the participating institutions and made available in 2010.

- d) Learner Progressions Project (LPP)
 - The LPP is reviewing and developing best practices for the establishment of block transfer and laddering transfer agreements.
 - ACAT institutions were canvassed for their feedback and approached for interviews. The interviews have been completed.
 - Student focus groups commence next week (November 2-6).
 - A report will be provided at the February 2010 meeting.

- e) CAQC Guidelines/Q & A Re: Diploma Programs
 - ACAT Chair and CAQC Chair met to discuss the proposed CAQC guidelines. Focus is on new programs with diploma program built into degree program.
 - Approval of the guidelines document is expected at the CAQC December 2009 meeting.

- f) Post-secondary Institution Visits
 - The majority of the institution site visits have been completed. Institutions still to be visited include Alberta College of Art and Design and Grande Prairie Regional College. The remaining visits will be conducted over the course of 2010.

- A report will be provided at the February 2010 Council meeting.
- g) Recent/Upcoming conferences and meetings
- WestCAT initially met in Vancouver in February of 2009 and identified five work priorities. In September 2009 in Regina the group met again and narrowed the priorities down to the top 3: (1) Approval and implementation of ACAT/BCCAT policies including each others' member institutions, by application, in our transfer systems (2) Exploring options for a repository of inter-provincial articulation agreements beginning with each jurisdiction completing its own environmental scan (3) Completion of PCCAT research project for developing and sharing Profile Reports across provinces.
- h) Alberta/Saskatchewan Letter of Intent
- The Ministers signed a Letter of Intent addressing areas to create a cooperative framework to articulate and facilitate further arrangements with the areas of quality assurance review systems, credit transfer and research and innovation.
- i) News Clippings of Interest
- The Council appreciates these articles and requested that they be sent out monthly to ensure the information is timely.
- j) Australian Educational International – North America
- Interesting information.
- k) Ministerial Statement - CMEC
- This handout is a product of the Credit Transfer Working Group with input from the June 2009 PCCAT Annual General meeting.
 - All Ministers across Canada have agreed to this statement (via their signature) and it will be posted on CMEC and the transferalberta.ca websites.
- l) Contact Persons Meeting – Banff, AB – October 30, 2009
- The ACAT Secretariat will be facilitating this annual meeting of the Contact Persons. Dr. Frank Gelin, Executive Director and Co-Chair of BCCAT, will be one of the guest speakers.

7. Confirm Meeting Date/Location for Winter 2010 Meeting

- a) February 11, 2010 – Bow Valley College, Calgary
- Confirmed.
- b) May 4, 2010 – Blue Quills First Nations College, St. Paul
- Date confirmed.
 - Location will be confirmed with Blue Quills First Nations College as we get closer to the meeting date.

Other Business

The PCCAT Annual General Meeting is scheduled for June 23 – 25 2010 in Vancouver BC adjacent to the Registrar's meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.