

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

ACAT Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2010
Rm. 9A, Sterling Place, 9940 – 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta

Present: Ron Woodward, Chair, Anna Kae Todd, Dietmar Kennepohl, Ann Tierney, Alice Wainwright-Stewart, Robert Boudreau, Tracy Edwards, Geoffrey Tate, Larry Hlushak, Robin Fisher, Jonathan Strand, Paula Burns, Colleen Skidmore, David Aldrich (via conference call), Joan Engel (Alberta Education), Dan Rizzoli (Campus Alberta Partnerships), Janice Park (ACAT Secretariat), Eric Dohei (ACAT Secretariat)

Regrets: Alastair McKinnon, Vincent Steinhauer

Guests: Connie Harrison (Assistant Deputy Minister, Post-secondary and Community Education), Tessa Cocchio (ASEC), Bob Brennan (Chair, Engineering Technology Task Group/University of Calgary)

Recorder: Wendy Pruden (ACAT Secretariat Administrative Assistant)

a) Welcome and Introductions

- Call to order at 8:35 a.m.
- The Chair made special welcome to the six newly appointed Council Members and the reappointed members. Each member introduced themselves.
- For the benefit of the new members, a brief history of the ACAT Council governance work over the past three years was provided. Council has also enhanced opportunities for learners and built stronger relationships with member institutions.
- Connie Harrison, ADM was welcomed and she conveyed Minister Horner's thank you and welcome to both the newly and reappointed Council Members. He sends his appreciation for everyone's time, enthusiasm and dedication to post-secondary education. Campus Alberta is a belief in the entire system collaborating together with the learner as the core. ACAT strives to make this happen by developing opportunities for the learner and remaining flexible to meet their needs.
- Tessa Cocchio (ASEC) was welcomed as an observer at this meeting. Her appointment as a Student Member will begin at the expiry of Geoffrey Tate's term on November 24, 2010.

2. Chair's report – Ron Woodward

- A **meeting with Minister Horner** was held after the May 4, 2010 Council meeting. The reports and recommendations from both the Nursing Task Group and the Engineering Technology Task Group were discussed. We committed to continue working with Alberta Nursing Educators Association (ANEA) and the Engineering Technology Task Group towards solutions for the learner.
- The **ACAT Roles and Mandate Document** were signed by Minister Horner and Ron Woodward, ACAT Chair. A review of this document will be carried out annually to meet the requirements under the pending legislation.

- Under the new governance model, the ACAT Council meeting is now a member only meeting and alternates cannot attend in a member's absence. Guests can be invited as agenda items may require.
- **Institutional site visits** began again in the Fall and will continue until mid-November. An item coming forward from these visits is a discussion about the transfer agreements between the University of Alberta and University of Calgary, and Mount Royal University and Grant MacEwan University. There is concern about the potential volume of transfer agreements that may develop. Colleen Skidmore agreed to work with the Alberta Universities Association (AUA) to determine the scope of the issue and how best to address it. We need to ensure the processes are clear, simple and that the workload is manageable. Council will discuss this further at the next meeting.
- A meeting of the **Western Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (WestCAT)** was held on October 1, 2010. Representatives from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba attended. Everyone was very keen to work together to develop better transfer in Western Canada. There was discussion about the three large Saskatchewan institutions possibly becoming members of ACAT system now that SaskCAT is dissolved.
- The **Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT)** Conference was held in Vancouver, June 22-24, 2010. Members identified a need for this organization to become more formalized. Robin Fisher has agreed to Chair the committee that will develop recommendations and bring it back to the 2011 meeting.
- Ron attended the September 1, 2010 meeting of the **Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)**. As partnerships develop, the issue of transfer from a college perspective will be explored. A three year timeline to achieve determined goals has been set.
- The **ACAT Contact Persons meeting** was held at NAIT on October 22, 2010. Both Ron and Larry Hlushak attended on behalf of Council. It was amazing to see how they work together to overcome issues and find ways to help the learner. It was a very positive meeting. There was discussion about creating a mentorship program so that they can continue to help each other.
- **Campus Alberta Quality Council** has invited us to attend their meeting in December. Dietmar Kennepohl will attend.
- What the Chair has been hearing:
 - o Need to improve the positive collaboration between institutions and foster a reciprocal respect among them while achieving our goal of serving the learner.
 - o Resource issues are prevalent. As Campus Alberta and the transfer system grow, the resource issue will grow. This may need to be discussed with the Minister and Ministry in the future.
 - o The Transfer Agreement Archival and Retrieval System(TAARS) is ten years old and experiencing some challenges. We flagged this a couple of years ago but budget constraints have not allowed us to address it. This continues to be an issue and will need to be looked at again.

- Thank you to the ACAT Secretariat for their support in this incredibly busy time. We appreciate the work that they do and the support they give Council.

3. AET and Education Ministry Briefing

a) AET Ministry Briefing – Dan Rizzoli

- Dan Rizzoli provided an update on Ministry business that affects the ACAT Council and ACAT Secretariat. Though the organizational structure has been revised, there has been no change in the relationship between the ACAT Council and the Minister.
- Council requested that any available updates or reports be sent to Council with the monthly news clipping service that is already being done by the Secretariat.

b) Education Ministry Briefing – Joan Engel

- Reports were discussed and circulated including:
 - o Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans
 - o Inspiring Action on Education
 - o Living Literacy: A Literacy Framework for Alberta’s Next Generation Economy (provincial framework)
 - o Literacy First: A Plan for Action (Education’s action plan)
- Albertans have identified that an educated Albertan in 2030 will need to be an ethical citizen, an engaged thinker and have an entrepreneurial spirit.
- Education’s student website, called Speak Out, is working well in providing a student voice in the development of K-12 programs and resources.
- The initial focus on literacy is to target grades 7 – 12 to identify literacy difficulties and strategies to overcome them.
- Formal agreements with Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut are in place for the development of senior high mathematics learning and teaching resources.
- Alberta Education is doing a strategic review of locally developed programs. Further discussions about how these programs might be recognized for admission purposes may happen in the future.

4. Discussion Items:

a) ACAT Governance sub-committee Update

The sub-committee has been working on this alignment of documents have been completed for approval.

i) Revised ACAT Documents

- The Code of Conduct and Principles, Policies and Procedures documents were aligned to the Mandate and Roles Document and were included in the meeting package. The recommendations were reviewed and slight typographical revisions determined.

MOVED by Robin Fisher and seconded by Dietmar Kennepohl that the Mandate and Roles Document, Code of Conduct, and Principles, Policies, and Procedures documents be approved with the discussed revisions. **CARRIED**

ii) Chair and Council Evaluation Tool

- This process is a requirement within the Mandate and Roles Document and a draft has been developed for approval by Council. The draft was circulated for review and will be deferred to the February 2011 meeting agenda.

b) Confidentiality

The ACAT Council is a collegial organization that doesn't have many instances where confidentiality is a requirement. However, for those occasions when it is needed a confidentiality statement is being drafted and will be brought forward at the February 2011 meeting.

c) Members in Good Standing Letters

This process is to let each institution know their status as an ACAT member institution. There are three categories – exemplary, satisfactory, and needs improvement. This year all members fall in either the exemplary or satisfactory categories. This is due to the extra efforts made by those who received the need improvement letters last year.

MOVED by Alice Wainwright-Stewart and seconded by Colleen Skidmore that the letters be approved as submitted. **CARRIED.**

5. Discussion Items:

a) Business Plan Development

Council identified and discussed key initiatives, ongoing and new, to map their business priorities for the next 3 years. It was noted that as an advisory body with no legislative authority Council has been focusing its efforts on best practices and areas where it can facilitate and enhance transfer opportunities. Central initiatives identified were articulation committee expansion, block transfer expansion and developing learning outcomes based framework. These initiatives are to be incorporated into the ACAT 2010-2013 Business Plan.

i) Articulation Committees:

Four articulation pilots were identified in 2009 with the intent of implementing them gradually. English and Aboriginal Education were the first to be launched in September 2010. The Articulation Sub-committee will meet in early 2011 to review launch of the pilot and to determine next steps in establishing Business and Child and Youth Care articulation committees. It is important to identify the learning outcomes for each of these sub-committees regarding transferability. Joan Engel pointed out that some of the pilots involve dual credits and so it is important that Alberta Education be involved in these articulation committees.

As the number of articulation committees grow work regarding learning outcomes and assessments will need to be addressed in order to build consistencies and align the credential framework. As institutions develop their own "learner outcome" frameworks they will need to ensure they are aligned and comfortable their partner institutions "learner outcome" approach. The level of trust and alignment institutions have with one another will impact how readily transfer can be facilitated. This perhaps needs to be developed by a Learning Outcomes Sub-committee. They can look at outcomes assessment and for a standard framework and best practice model. Consultation with the professional accreditation body of a discipline is recommended. Keep the process of communication and articulation committees happening.

- Membership Sub-committee:
 - There are two applications received to date: Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning; and Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute.
 - It is recommended that the current review process be reviewed and streamlined in anticipation of receiving increasing numbers of applications.
- Task Groups:
 - These are created when a specific task is requested by the Ministry. The Task Group reports their findings to Council which in turn provides recommendations to the Minister.
- Instructor Qualifications Best Practices:
 - The final draft of the document is expected to be presented to Council at the February 2011 meeting.
 - Additional volunteers are needed. These volunteers would assist with incorporating the feedback received from stakeholders into the final document.
- Other sub-committees and task groups:
 - Aboriginal Education Articulation Committee
 - Engineering Technology Task Group
 - Nursing Task Group
- New sub-committees:
 - Block Transfer: include discussion re college to college transfer regarding Campus Alberta and collaborative delivery. The basis of eCampus Alberta (on-line learning) is on outcomes and transfer. There is less distinction between sending and receiving institutions so we may need to adjust our terminology moving forward. Bring this to the February meeting.

Research the Mount Royal University/Grant MacEwan University issue in relation to Campus Alberta Framework (6 sector model) and how we can better serve the learner.

Learner outcomes and block transfer are linked. Issues arise regarding flexibility for both the student and the institution. Sustainability of transfer agreements though curriculum changes is in the best interest of the learner. Need to reduce the practice of a block transfer agreements being assessed course-by-course rather than accepting the block.

Committee needs to clearly define the principles and best practices in block transfer.

Areas of interest include learning outcomes and assessment. We look at how to facilitate transfer and articulation. It was agreed that a separate group outside of articulation committees should look at this.

We need to continue discussion with the Campus Alberta Quality Council and clearly understand each others' role plus maintain a positive and collaborative relationship with our partners, members and the learner.

- PLAR:
 - The PLAR Stakeholder Committee meets four times annually and we will continue to include an update as a standing agenda item at the Council meeting.
 - Council maintains interest in PLAR and would like to be engaged in discussion related to PLAR credit transferability.
- ii) 2009-2010 Annual Report
- A PDF copy of the report was provided to each council member for their information.
- iii) 2008-2010 Site Visit Summary
- A summary of the site visits was provided in the council package for council members' information.
 - Institutions have expressed their appreciation for this communication opportunity with the Council.
 - An update will be provided at the February 11, 2011 council meeting.
- iv) ACAT Sub-committees (volunteer members):
- Governance Sub-committee: Robin Fisher, Ann Tierney, Larry Hlushak
 - Articulation Sub-committee: Robin Fisher, Colleen Skidmore, Joan Engel,
 - ACAT Membership Sub-committee: Dietmar Kennepohl, Alice Wainwright-Stewart
 - Instructor Qualifications Best Practices Sub-committee: Ann Tierney, Alice Wainwright-Stewart, Karen McDaniel (SAIT), Jonathan Strand, Bob Boudreau, Aboriginal Representative

NEW

- Learner Outcome and Assessment Sub-committee: Dietmar Kennepohl, Tracy Edwards, Tessa Cocchio
- Block Transfer Sub-committee: Paula Burns, Alice Wainwright-Stewart, Anna-Kae Todd, Tessa Cocchio, University of Calgary (Ann Tierney to identify)

Each Sub-committee is asked to identify a Chair and present an update on their activities and timeline goals (3 yr horizon) at the February 2011 Council meeting.

v) Think Tank Document:

The "Think Tank Document" was provided for Council's information. It was developed as a result of a Post-secondary Excellence Division discussion by individuals from the on the future view of transfer in Alberta.

6. Discussion Items

a) ACAT Membership Update:

- Thompson Rivers University-Open Learning application is being reviewed and additional information has been requested. Once the information is received another meeting of the Sub-committee will be called.

- Private-For-Profit Institutions discussions have been held with the Ministry. A review of the ACAT policy is recommended to ensure that the application criteria is still valid in the current environment. We need to develop an objective, rational, collegial way to address applications from this category of institution.
- The Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute application for membership summary will be circulated to the ACAT Council members and those interested in being involved in the sub-committee to review the application will inform the ACAT Secretariat.

b) Best Practices:

- Besides the Instructor Qualifications Best Practices Sub-committee which was discussed earlier, there is a Contact Persons Best Practices Sub-committee that has been resurrected to review and refresh the 2005 Best Practices document. It is recommended that the new Block Transfer Sub-committee include a representative from the ACAT Contact Persons Best Practices Committee. Council will be kept informed of the sub-committees' progress.

c) Articulation Sub-committee Updates:

Note: It is agreed that whenever a new Sub-committee is formed, a representative from Council will attend the first meeting and give a presentation on Council's role in the process.

- English: The Terms of Reference has been included in the meeting package. A verbal update was provided and a copy of the meeting notes will be circulated when they are approved. Next meeting will be in January 2011. The sub-committee will be asked to revisit their Terms of Reference and amend them to include a statement regarding outcomes.
- Aboriginal Education: This sub-committee met in September and a Chair and Vice-chair have been chosen. Their Terms of Reference and Minutes will be circulated to Council when they are approved.

The previously existing Indigenous Languages Articulation Committee will now be a sub-committee of the Aboriginal Education articulation committee.

- As the sub-committees under the old articulation model meet, they will be asked to transition to the new model.

d) Task Group Update

i) Nursing Task Group

- Janice Park and Eric Dohei attended a meeting of the Alberta Nursing Educators Association (ANEA) that included the Chairs and Deans of the Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses system. The Nursing Task Group process and recommendations were shared with them. To assist learners, a student transfer tip sheet will be created and housed on the Transfer Alberta website. They also discussed tracking to help gather statistics in the future. Three ANEA members volunteered to work with the ACAT Secretariat. The Council would like to have an annual or semi-annual report depending on activity in this area.

- ii) Engineering Technology Task Group
 - Dr. Bob Brennan, Chair, provided an update to Council regarding the progress and next steps of the Task Group.
 - A final written report and recommendations will be presented at the February 2011 Council meeting.
 - The Council asked Dr. Brennan to express its appreciation to the Task Group members for their continued work.

- e) Pan-Canadian Activities
 - i) PCCAT – See Chair’s Report.

 - ii) WestCAT – See Chair’s Report.

 - iii) ACCC-TAP – See Chair’s Report.

- f) Learner Outcomes: See ACAT Sub-committee Section.

7. Information Items

All items were provided as information in the meeting package. Unless there are specific questions they will not be discussed.

- a) Site Visits 2010 – 2011
- b) Web Trends
- c) Correspondence
- d) New Council Member Orientation October 18, 2010
- e) Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Update
- f) 2010 Contact Persons Meeting Update
- g) 2009 Transfer Patterns Update
- h) Graduate Outcomes Survey: Transfer Report
- i) Recent and Upcoming Events/Conferences

8. Confirm Meeting Date/Location for Winter 2010 Meeting

- February 25, 2011, Calgary (hosted by Mount Royal University)
- May 17, 2011, Lloydminster (hosted by Lakeland College)
- October 4, 2011, Edmonton (hosted by NAIT)

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.