



# **Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer**

11 June 2003  
The King's University College

**PRESENT:** Lucille Walter (Chair), Shirley Barg, Ed Behnke, Fred Carnew, Catherine Eddy, Matthew Glass, Peter Haney, Gretchen Hess, Judith Hughes, Irene Langille (for Gord Nixon), Lynne Mulder, Raja Panwar (for Rick Morrow), Kevin Paul, Jean Valgardson, Marilyn Patton (Executive Officer), Marena Fakli (Manager), Patti Papirnik (Manager).

**ABSENT:** Rick Morrow, Vance MacNichol, Gord Nixon

The Chair welcomed members to The King's University College and reported that Rick Morrow and Gord Nixon had each expressed regret that they were unable to attend today's meeting.

## 1. Presentation from The King's University College

The Chair welcomed Dr. Henk Van Andel, President, and Glenn Keeler, Registrar of The King's University College. In keeping with its practice to invite the host institution to make a presentation, Dr. Van Andel was invited to introduce members to the campus, their programs and their challenges.

Dr. Van Andel welcomed members to the campus. The King's University College is a faith-based, privately governed Christian university college, offering both three- and four-year BA and BSc as well as several professional degree programs. Its enrolment is approximately 700 students and this is anticipated to grow at 6-7% per year. Teaching excellence and research activities are emphasized at King's.

Glenn Keeler provided information on King's experience with ACAT and the transfer system. He indicated that being involved in the transfer system and developing course transfer credit arrangements with other institutions has been an important part of King's development. King's has developed a useful tool on their website that enables students to see both the course outline as well as how the course will transfer to other institutions and what courses taken at another institution will transfer to King's as an equivalent. The results are directly from ACAT's transfer agreements database. This has been very helpful in the student advising experience.

Mr. Keeler identified several issues and recommendations regarding ACAT and the transfer system.

- ACAT could play a stronger role by monitoring how institutions follow ACAT's policies and procedures when considering a decision to accept or reject a course for transfer. It is a "terrifying prospect" for a small institution to seek ACAT's mediation. Therefore, he suggested that ACAT audit instances where transfer agreements were denied to ensure the policies and procedures are being followed.
- Computing science would benefit from a program articulation process.
- Residency requirements affect transfer success. When the computing science department of a receiving institution states that a certain number of senior courses must be taken only at the receiving institution, equivalent courses at a sending institution are not transferable. On this issue, one member suggested that ACAT

might consider studying what percentage of students have 'credits extra to degree' because of residency requirements, and consider if this is a hindrance to students.

The Chair thanked Dr. Van Andel and Glenn Keeler for the presentation and for the warm hospitality offered to ACAT.

2. Minutes, 17 March 2003

In response to the Chair's invitation to identify any errors or omissions, one member noted an omission on page 7. In the second paragraph under Social Studies, the sentence should read "Mr. Panwar responded that, the numbering scheme was designed to communicate that recent program revisions to the 13-23-33 programs had increased the curriculum standard."

Another member raised the issue of course numbering again and suggested that she would like to have the minutes note her ongoing concern over the numbering scheme.

It was further noted that a listing of post-secondary representatives on the Science Advisory Committee should be appended to the minutes.

It was MOVED and SECONDED that the revised minutes of 17 March 2003 be adopted.

CARRIED

3. ACAT Chair and Secretariat Reports

The Chair directed members' attention to the written report in the agenda package. She then highlighted several items and indicated that she was not able to visit Medicine Hat College on 6 June, as reported. She has had a number of successful speaking engagements, notably the panel presentation with the Chairs of the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board and the Students Finance Board to the Alberta School Superintendents. Another presentation to the ACTISEC Student Leadership conference was successful, albeit there is work to be done to encourage student leadership to be familiar with the transfer system and the work of ACAT. The presentation to the "What's New for Counsellors" workshop put on by Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the Student Finance Board was also a good opportunity. With current information about ACAT and the transfer system, high school counsellors can provide better services to students.

Later this fall, the Chair plans to present in conjunction with Learner Assistance branch of Alberta Learning at the Education Liaison Association of Alberta conference and at the Alberta Teachers Association Counsellors conference. It has been difficult to address these associations, so this is significant progress.

The Chair next drew members' attention to a letter from Phil Gougeon, Assistant Deputy Minister of Adult Learning, referring to the new legislation, Bill 43, *Post-secondary Learning Act*. As ACAT is invited to offer its comments on the proposed legislation, she invited members to comment.

There was considerable discussion on the proposed legislation. It was agreed that the Chair should respond to Mr. Gougeon on behalf of ACAT. Two concerns that arose were the lack of consultation on this legislation, and the absence of detail concerning the composition of the Campus Alberta Board of Accreditation and Coordination (CABAC) and its role and responsibilities.

One of the student members indicated that she had heard it suggested that this Board was not important. She felt the Minister needed to be told that this was a very important Board, with significant impact on degree programming in the province. This confusion may be the result of a misinterpretation of the word 'significant' with regard to a significant agency, board and commission. CABAC would not meet the government's definition of a "significant board". The Executive Officer undertook to relay the misunderstanding to department officials.

Members discussed the difference between accreditation and coordination and how these two activities are separate and distinct. The requisite skill sets are very different for these two activities. Members also expressed concern over the workload for this new Board, believe it has been underestimated and suggested that it might 'bog down' the system, particularly if it mirrors the Private Colleges Accreditation Board's (PCAB) process. As well, members wondered if a single board could deal with all levels of degree programming. There is concern that Alberta's reputation in quality degree programming could be undermined and that the Board would be perceived to be unresponsive.

One member noted that private colleges were concerned with the loss of PCAB as CABAC will supercede it.

Members questioned the impact on ACAT of this proposed legislation. It is helpful to have course and program transferability referred to in legislation but members wondered if it meant that ACAT would become subordinate to CABAC. They were concerned that section 109 (3d) of Bill 43 implied a regulatory approach to transfer which might force ACAT to become more regulatory and less collaborative.

These concerns and questions will be forwarded to Mr. Gougeon by the Chair.

The Executive Officer then highlighted some of the Secretariat's activities. Thanks to the hard work of ACAT's Contact Persons, their assistants and Secretariat staff, she reported that the *2003-2004 Alberta Transfer Guide* was completed and distributed on time. She also reported that in the next edition of the Graduate Outcomes Survey, there will be questions about transfer including one that is designed to discover students' perspectives on why transfer credit was not granted as expected. She reported that her planned presentation to a delegation from Botswana was recently cancelled and as yet not rescheduled.

The Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) recently provided ACAT with a copy of its *National Transcript Guide for Use in Canadian Postsecondary Institutions*. The Executive Officer noted that the document is the result of an initiative to develop a national academic record and transcript guide for use by all Canadian post-secondary institutions. The document is available on the ARUCC website at <http://arucctranscriptguide.homeunix.org:8080/files/home/Reportv2.5.pdf>.

4. ACAT Business Plan

The ACAT Business Plan identifies the vision, mission and goals of ACAT and relates the core businesses to their achievement. The plan has been discussed at previous meetings and a final draft plan was included in the agenda package. Secretariat staff reviewed the revisions and the Chair then asked for approval of the Plan.

It was MOVED and SECONDED that the ACAT Business Plan 2003-2006 be approved and posted on the ACAT site at [www.acat.gov.ab.ca](http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca).

CARRIED

5. Draft ACAT Annual Report to the Minister

The Terms of Reference for ACAT require that the Council report annually to the Minister of Learning on its activities. The draft Annual Report for 2002-2003 was distributed in the agenda package. Members felt the report captures the activities of ACAT.

It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Annual Report for 2002-2003 be adopted and forwarded to the Minister.

CARRIED

6. Duplicate Application Detection (DAD) 2002 Report

In order to facilitate communication and working relationships among institutions and to help students, ACAT has conducted an annual Duplicate Application Detection (DAD) project since 1992. The purpose of participation in the project is to provide post-secondary institutions with data that can be useful for informed planning, particularly in such areas as enrolment management, program rationalization, recruitment strategies, and performance indicators. ACAT acts as the communication hub, linking the post-secondary institutions.

At the ACAT meeting in February 2002, the frequency of the project was questioned but it was agreed that ACAT would continue the DAD project for the Fall 2002. Its usefulness would be revisited before initiation of the next year's study. Then in March 2003, members requested that the Executive Officer poll DAD delegates for their thoughts on the project's frequency. The Executive Officer reported that she had surveyed the DAD delegates and that the majority of them indicated that the project should be conducted again in fall 2003. Delegates reported that preliminary application statistics were puzzling this year and many were noting an increase in applications.

It was MOVED and SECONDED that the DAD project would not be done every year unless circumstances warranted. It was further MOVED and SECONDED that given the circumstances, it was important to do the DAD project in the Fall 2003.

CARRIED

7. DeVry Institute of Technology – Calgary – Transfer Guide

DeVry Institute of Technology - Calgary that, upon recommendation of the Private Colleges Accreditation Board (PCAB) was authorized by Order in Council in January 2001 to offer three baccalaureate degree programs. These degree programs are a Bachelor of

Business Operations, a Bachelor of Technology in Computer Information Systems and a Bachelor of Technology in Electronic Engineering Technology. Since that time, DeVry-Calgary has been interested in being part of the transfer system in Alberta by being included in the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.

The Chair welcomed Mr. Jim Barmby, Dean of Business, and Mr. Greg Lucier, Dean of Information Technology, to the meeting and invited them to discuss their institution with members. Noting that DeVry-Calgary has existed since 1981, Mr. Barmby provided a short synopsis of the history and mission of the institution, and its course offerings. He then referenced the 28 April 2003 letter from President John Ballheim to ACAT. In it, Mr. Ballheim requests that DeVry - Calgary be included in the *Alberta Transfer Guide* as a receiving institution.

To be included in the Guide as a receiving institution, the institution must formally request this and the Council votes on the matter. DeVry's request has been supported by providing evidence of student interest in transferring to DeVry-Calgary and its experience in granting transfer credit from other institutions.

Responding to a members' question, Mr. Barmby confirmed that DeVry-Calgary would also like to be sending institution, as they are interested in building bridges with other Alberta institutions. Mr. Barmby described the curriculum development process used by DeVry-Calgary and their commitment to annual program reviews and professional development. He further responded to members' questions concerning the academic schedule, course numbering and prerequisites, grading system and transferability of courses into the DeVry - Phoenix degree programs which are offered on the Calgary campus. After these responses, the Chair thanked the guests for coming and answering members' questions.

The Chair reviewed the task at hand. Having heard the presentation from the DeVry-Calgary officials and having had many questions answered, it was time to respond to the request from the institution to be included in the *Alberta Transfer Guide* as a receiving institution.

It was MOVED and SECONDED that ACAT approve the inclusion of DeVry Institute of Technology – Calgary as a receiving institution in the next edition of the *Transfer Guide*.

During the ensuing discussion, one member stated that he had concerns about granting this status to DeVry - Calgary and wanted to defer the decision. The member felt that deferring this decision until the next Council meeting would not disadvantage students and it would allow time for inter-institutional discussion and consultation within his own institution. Additional Council members indicated that an opportunity for further discussion was desired.

Several members raised the following as concerns: nomenclature of degrees, American content and influence, and academic standards. One member countered the concerns stating that ACAT is a body that has the mandate to facilitate transfer agreements between institutions for the benefit of students. It is not a body to accredit degrees, monitor nomenclature or set academic standards. ACAT is to be a catalyst to enable students to be able to transfer to institutions throughout the province. Several other members concurred. Kevin Paul noted that the University of Calgary's Committee on Admissions and Transferability has agreed to accept DeVry-Calgary degrees for admission to after degree programs.

At this point, it was MOVED and SECONDED to table the motion until some time in the future.

Several members spoke to the tabling of the motion. It was noted that tabling the motion offered an opportunity to allow discussion and consultation and increase the comfort level of all members on Council.

DEFEATED

It was MOVED and SECONDED that the motion be tabled until the next meeting of Council.

CARRIED  
(unanimously)

The Executive Officer offered to provide information to any institution on the accreditation processes of the Private Colleges Accreditation Board, if that would be helpful. In addition, the Executive Officer agreed to bring back to Council a 'mock-up' of an entry in the *Guide* and some suggested wording regarding what DeVry-Calgary could use in its publications about the transfer system should Council agree to their request.

8. Transfer Patterns – Fall 2002

Discussion of the Transfer Pattern Study 2002 was initiated in March but subsequently deferred until the June meeting due to time constraints. The "Transfer Patterns Study Fall 2002 (Mobility Tables)" and the "Transfer Patterns Studies 1979 – 2002 (Extracts by Sector)" were distributed previously and members were asked to bring their copies of the studies to the meeting.

The Executive Officer presented a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the 2002 results and some comparisons over time.

The reports were accepted as information and will be posted on the Council's website.

9. e-Learning

- (a) eLearnAlberta presentation – The topic of online learning was discussed at a previous meeting and members felt that this topic warranted further understanding and knowledge. On the recommendation of members, Tricia Donovan, Operational Director of the Alberta Online Learning Association was invited to attend the meeting.

The Alberta Online Learning Association, which is now eLearnAlberta, is a consortium of fourteen colleges and technical institutes that has been established to facilitate increased access to high quality online learning opportunities. The mandate of eLearnAlberta is to provide learner access to online courses and courseware, and offer seamless transferability for a student. eLearnAlberta is based on the principles of collaboration, cooperation, accessibility, and financial viability. Further information is available at [www.elearnalberta.ca](http://www.elearnalberta.ca).

Following a question and answer period, the Chair thanked Ms. Donovan for her presentation.

- (b) *Learning and Technology Policy Framework* - This policy framework, which was sent by Alberta Learning to ACAT on 20 May 2003, invited ACAT to provide comments. The *Framework* proposes a vision, principles and goals to ensure that learning and technology activity optimizes benefits to learners and enhances the effectiveness of the learning system.

Due to time constraints, a full discussion of this document was not possible. Members were asked to review the document and provide comments to the Secretariat as soon as possible. One member voiced a concern that the official timeline for providing comments was much too short.

10. Prairie Bible College – Transfer Guide

Transfer agreements with sending institutions not already listed in the *Alberta Transfer Guide* are added only on the recommendation to Council by a public receiving post-secondary institution. In a letter dated 9 June 2003, The University of Lethbridge requested that its transfer agreements with Prairie Bible College be included in the *Transfer Guide* beginning with the 2004-2005 edition.

Some members asked for additional information about Prairie Bible College and this information was provided.

It was MOVED and SECONDED that Council approve the inclusion of transfer agreements with Prairie Bible College in Section III of the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.

CARRIED

As a result of this motion, Prairie Bible College will be asked to formally adopt the principles, policies and procedures of ACAT as outlined in Section 5 of the *Guide* and to name a Contact Person.

11. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

In the background material in the agenda package, it indicated that the Chair was to be added as Alberta's representative to the CMEC Steering Committee on Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). The Chair clarified that as the committee's work was basically completed she would not be added as a member.

The Chair reported that she recently prepared a one-page snapshot of PLAR activities. In doing this, she noted that there does not appear to be much progress on PLAR activities in recent years in Alberta. Members questioned the conclusion and noted that PLAR activities may go unnoticed because they are not always referred to as Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition. Other terms used by post-secondary institutions include "Transfer Credit", "Advanced Credit", and "Course Challenge". Perhaps the policies and procedures are not sufficiently obvious.

Given the high interest in PLAR nationally, the Chair asked for approval to reinstate the ACAT Advisory Committee on PLAR.

It was AGREED that the Council would reactivate the Advisory Committee on PLAR. The Executive Officer reported that she already had names of two people who were interested in serving on this committee.

## 12. Secondary – Post-secondary Articulation

The Executive Officer shared a copy of a letter received from Maria David-Evans, Deputy Minister of Learning, which thanked ACAT for successful completion of the English Language Arts project.

Raja Panwar, Director of the Curriculum Branch, attending the meeting on behalf of Rick Morrow, spoke about secondary to post-secondary articulation and the process of curriculum development.

- (a) Social Studies – The Chair noted that ACAT's Social Studies Secondary to Post-secondary Articulation Committee had met on 10 April and would meet again when draft curriculum is available. Responding to a question from one member, Mr. Panwar reviewed the consultation process between post-secondary institutions and Alberta Learning by reviewing the advisory committee structure. He further acknowledged that it is an ongoing challenge to ensure the best communication occurs between post-secondary institutions and Alberta Learning. He would welcome invitations from post-secondary institutions to meet with them to discuss curriculum as it is developed.
- (b) Implementation Schedule – Mr. Panwar distributed an updated version of the Implementation Schedule for Programs of Study and Related Activities, dated April 2003. The new Social Studies Program of Studies will be implemented in 2006/2007 and the new Science programs will begin to be implemented in 2006 as well.
- (c) Science – The high school Science curriculums are scheduled to be revised over the next several years. Minor adjustments are planned for grade 11-12 biology, chemistry, physics and science courses. Members considered the need for a Science Secondary to Post-secondary Articulation Committee and the best time for such a committee to commence its work.

It was AGREED that an ACAT Secondary to Post-secondary Science Articulation Committee be struck as soon as possible.

## 13. ACAT Communications Plan

The ACAT Communications Plan is to increase awareness of the work of ACAT in the learning system and how students can most effectively take advantage of the admissions and transfer system to make the most of their learning system.

A contractor was retained to refine messages about ACAT and the transfer system, and design a new graphic treatment. Marena Fakli of the ACAT Secretariat introduced Randy Parker, President of Parcom Marketing Inc., who had been invited to hear members' comments on the artwork. She then discussed the development of the communications material and showed members the proposed new artwork for a poster, bookmark, and web page.

Members had numerous comments in reaction to the proposed new graphics. Some felt it was dynamic and eye-catching; others felt it produced a feeling of trepidation and discomfort. Members recognized that today's students are much more informed than years ago, are technologically adept, and independent.

It was the consensus of the members that what was needed was input from students on their reaction to the messaging and graphics. Members asked that two different graphic treatments be prepared, for comparison purposes, and tested out with students. The Chair agreed to assemble a focus group and test the materials.

The Communications Plan will be discussed again at the next meeting. It is important that some of these materials be completed so that updated resources may be used by the Chair at upcoming speaking engagements in the fall.

14. CMEC Summary and Principles

The Executive Officer represents Alberta on the Working Group on Credit Transfer under the auspices of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). At a previous meeting, the Executive Officer had shared with Council members the set of principles on Credit Transfer in Canada that has been adopted by the Ministers.

Due to time constraints, the discussion on these principles was deferred until the next meeting.

15. Alberta Transfer Guide 2003-2004

Transfer agreements are being negotiated continuously throughout the year. As they are finalized and verified, they are viewable via the Online Alberta Transfer Guide. Each February, the ACAT Secretariat begins to work with institutions to prepare the next edition of the printed *Alberta Transfer Guide*. This spring, 4800 copies were printed and distributed to post-secondary institutions and high schools in Alberta, as well as post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Other users may access the Online Alberta Transfer Guide.

The Executive Officer directed members' attention to some of the Guide's highlights as outlined in the agenda package.

16. Proposed meeting dates for 2003-2004

Each year, the proposed meeting dates for the coming year are discussed in an effort to schedule the four meetings at this time.

It was AGREED that Council would meet in the coming year according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, 30 September 2003  
Wednesday, 19 November 2003  
Thursday, 11 March 2004  
Wednesday, 12 May 2004

17. Items for Information

The Executive Officer drew members' attention to the following news articles and documents included in the agenda package.

- “Rethinking Residency in the Age of Online Learning”. Industry Canada. Full report may be found at <http://www.cvu-uvc.ca/RethinkingResidency.pdf>.
- “Universities Set to Refuse More Applicants this Fall”. *The Edmonton Journal*, 9 May 2003.
- Excerpt from Bill 43, Post-Secondary Learning Act, 2003. Full text of bill may be found at <http://www.assembly.ab.ca/pro/bills/ba-bill.asp?SelectBill=043>.
- “Campuses must keep pace with e-learning trends: academic”. *The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon)*, 26 April 2003.
- “Olds College Teams up with U of A”. *Grande Prairie Daily Herald-Tribune*, 28 March 2003.
- “Report Being Sent to High Schools Outlines What College Freshmen Need to Know to Succeed”. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 22 April 2003.
- “High Schools Fail to Prepare Many Students for College, Stanford Study Says”. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 5 March 2003.
- “University Degree Worth Weight in Gold”. *The Toronto Star*, 11 March 2003.
- “Improved Learning Focus of New Pan-Canadian Assessment Program”. Communique from Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2 April 2003
- “Province Moves to Establish University College of the North”. Government of Manitoba, News Release, 2 May 2003.
- “NAIT to take over Fairview College”. *The Edmonton Journal*, 16 April 2003, B9.
- “The Art of Predicting Enrolment”. *University Affairs*, April 2003.
- “How Should Universities Respond to Growing Participation Rates?” *University Affairs*, April 2003.
- “FIPSE: Thirty Years of Learning Anytime and Anywhere”. *Change*, September/October 2002. (FIPSE is Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education)
- “Recognizing Learning: Building Capacity in a Knowledge Economy”. Brochure on conference hosted by Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment. Winnipeg, Manitoba 19-22 October 2003.
- “2001 Census: Analysis Series – Education in Canada: Raising the Standard”. Statistics Canada.

The Executive Officer invited members to forward articles of interest that could be included in future agenda packages.

The Chair again expressed her thanks to The King’s University College for hosting the meeting and to President Van Andel and Glenn Keeler for their remarks on the strategic directions of the College.

It was MOVED and SECONDED that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The next meeting will take place on 30 September 2003.

Adopted by Council  
11 June 2003