

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

ACAT Meeting Minutes – October 15, 2008 Grant MacEwan College, Edmonton

Present: Ron Woodward (Chair), Catherine Eddy, Larry Hlushak, Olive Yonge, Jim Darcy, Robin Fisher, Marylea Jarvis, Peter Haney, Stella Shrum, Anna Kae Todd, Leona Makokis (for Vincent Steinhauer), Fred Carnew, Alastair MacKinnon, Jeff Agnew, Dietmar Kennepohl, Bert Seinen, Marg Leathem, Lisa Fox (p.m. only), Anne Rytton

Absent: Gord Nixon, Ann Tierney, Vincent Steinhauer

Guests: Cathryn Heslep (Grant MacEwan College), Wendy Richer (recorder), Manisha Arora (ACAT intern), Nancy Dhillon (ACAT administrative support)

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Cathryn Heslep, Vice-President, Student Services, of Grant MacEwan College, welcomed Council members to the college and expressed appreciation for the work done by ACAT.
- Ron Woodward provided opening remarks.

2a. ACAT Governance Subcommittee

Proposed Governance and Recruitment Structure Document

- The Chair summarized the proposed changes to ACAT's governance structure process and shared the outcomes of the Governance Subcommittee's May 2008 meeting. The Chair emphasized the importance of ACAT's governance model addressing the needs of learners and reflecting the spirit of Campus Alberta.
- Some changes were suggested by Council to the model which will be incorporated into the next draft. The document will be updated and circulated to all Council members via e-mail for final review. Next steps will include sending the draft model to nominating bodies for their input as well as a discussion with the Minister on the model. It is planned that the model will be approved in Spring 2009 for implementation.

Council Principles, Policies and Procedures document

- As part of the work being undertaken to align Council documentation with the Government of Alberta's Governance Policy Framework, ACAT's mission and mandate needed to be reviewed. The secretariat made changes to the document for discussion with Council that included alignment with proposed changes to ACAT's governance model and to more strongly align with the Campus Alberta vision.
- Members discussed the document and recommended revisions to it.
- With ACAT's re-branding, there was discussion of whether it is appropriate to link it to the Campus Alberta initiative and rename Council; however, Council members agreed to leave the ACAT name intact, but will include the Campus Alberta reference in ACAT documentation.
- The document will be updated as discussed and sent to all members for further review prior to being recommended to the Minister for final approval.

2b. Enhancing Articulation Options

- As discussed at the May Council meeting, enhanced options for articulation committees were developed to focus on areas where there are numerous program agreements, where there is high student demand, where transferability is limited, and in broad areas (i.e., Arts). It was suggested that an Articulation Committee in English be established as it is an area with a large volume of students.
- Several challenges to moving forward with enhanced articulation were identified, in particular the strain on institution resources that this additional work would represent. Council members proposed that the enhanced model should be based on need and perhaps a pilot could prove to be helpful and add value beyond articulation. Representatives indicated that the First Nations Languages articulation committee is valued and while it has had its challenges, the committee continues to make progress.
- Funding for committees and resources were key issues discussed, and further research was deemed necessary before proceeding with pilot articulation committees.
- ACAT Secretariat will provide a report to the Contact Persons for their information and provide their feedback to Council.

3a. Repositioning the Transfer System

- The current system software is becoming outdated and costly to maintain. ACAT Secretariat is working with technical advisors in reviewing and analyzing the system to enhance its functionality and to reposition it to support future directions for the transfer system.
- The Education representative suggested that a tool be built in the system to enable students to access information about secondary courses for admission into the post-secondary system.
- Consultation with institution representatives, students, and other stakeholders affected by the system will be critical as the redesign moves forward.
- ACAT Secretariat will review and analyze other transfer systems and involve institutions in determining if our traditional mechanism for forming transfer agreements and determining transferability is still effective or if it is timely to re-engineer our approach to move the transfer system forward over the next 10 to 20 years. The Secretariat will provide Council their research findings and the results of the redesign survey for their information.

3b. Tri-Province Meeting (BCCAT and SaskCAT)

- The councils of each of the three provinces met in September and agreed that the work and discussions between the provinces should continue to foster learner mobility.
- There was discussion about a possible protocol agreement with Saskatchewan and perhaps a tri-provincial agreement. It was identified that Manitoba representatives should be included in discussions as well. They could support and learn from one another while continuing to support a western Canada approach and build on the Pan-Canadian mobility model.
- BCCAT's draft policy with respect to the inclusion of Alberta institutions in the BC transfer system were presented to Council members. Council discussed how to proceed with developing a policy regarding BC institution membership in the Alberta transfer system.
- There was discussion about differences between private institutions in the two post-secondary systems, and Council members agreed that the Alberta policy would need to be different in order to reflect the differences between the two post-secondary systems.

- Discussion needs to continue on this matter, and the AU representative agreed to lead a working group to gather institution feedback. A working group could be established by the end of December to gather information and report back to Council. The Secretariat will respond to BC and provide an update on the next steps.

3c. Instructor Qualifications discussion

- This matter has been brought forward to the ACAT Secretariat as well as identified at a number of the Chair's institutional visits. It is causing a barrier in processing transfer agreements.
- It is important that the academic credential be appropriate (and this varies across disciplines).
- Council members suggested that a new approach needs to be developed in conjunction with the institutions in order to overcome the challenges that instructor qualifications issues are creating in the development of transfer agreements.
- Council members suggested that it would be appropriate to review the CAQC's policy on instructor qualifications as a model. It was also suggested that research into the Alberta Education process for considering exceptions in the teacher qualifications could help inform the development of an appropriate process.

3d. Review of Sending/Receiving institution policies

- An institution has taken on a new role as receiver with the universities and submitted a number of proposals with AU, UofA, UofC and UofL as sender. AU has commenced work on these proposals, but the other universities have not yet reviewed the proposals.
- There was discussion on the principles of mutuality in the processing of transfer agreements, and recommended that further research on the background of this principle be explored and discussed at the Contact Persons meeting.

3e. Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) Retreat

- Ron Woodward provided an update of ACAT's recent participation in CAQC's recent retreat, and indicated that both parties are committed to continuing to enhance their working relationship.

3f. Newman Theological College

- Newman Theological College applied to be a member of ACAT and their application was initially denied as it came to the attention of the subcommittee members considering their proposal that Newman had announced on its website that they were no longer offering undergraduate-level programs. The Chair and the ACAT Secretariat met with the institution, and the institution has asked that ACAT reconsider their decision as they plan to continue to offer undergraduate-level programming in a limited capacity in the future.
- Council members indicated that they would like clarification from Newman on the number of undergraduate courses that will be offered in the future, as this would be a necessary requirement for membership in the transfer system. Motion made by Jeff Agnew that Newman's application be approved if they are able to provide evidence that they will be offering undergraduate-level courses for the foreseeable future.

MOTION CARRIED

3g. PLAR – next steps for ACAT

- The PLAR Action Plan was approved by the Minister October 14, 2008 and will be launched at the CAPLA Conference October 19-21, 2008.
- The feedback on the review of the Action Plan was very positive. A stakeholder advisory committee will be struck and ACAT will be involved in activities regarding communication of the plan. As well, an individual will be hired to coordinate the work on PLAR.

3h. ACAT Business Plan Update

- Marg Leathem provided a status update report on the work of ACAT in relation to the 2008-09 ACAT Work Plan. The plan will be updated and presented at the next Council meeting.

4a. Secretariat Update

- ACAT continues to gather feedback from institutions on how the new Math curriculum being developed (scheduled for Grade 10 implementation in 2010) will impact their future admissions requirements. The Secretariat will meet with Alberta Education to discuss next steps.
- The PCCAT Research Subcommittee requires jurisdictional feedback by the end of November as to whether there are Alberta institutions interested in participating in a national research project on interprovincial transfer. PCCAT has requested funding from CMEC to coordinate the project. ACAT will be approaching the Ministry to highlight the project and request some financial support from the Ministry for an Alberta institution to participate.
- Council members were advised of the New ACAT URL (transferalberta.ca) with supporting promotional material and informed of future plans to redesign the public website content.
- An update on the revised data requirements for the Transfer Patterns Study was provided.
- The Learner Progressions Best Practices Project is underway and a consultant will be hired. ACAT Secretariat will be seeking Council assistance with this project shortly.
- Upcoming conferences include the annual CAPLA conference (October 19-21, 2008) and Contact Persons' Meeting (November 12, 2008).
- Institution visits will continue with the next one scheduled for October 22 (The Banff Centre).

5. Set Meeting Dates

- 1st week of February (Edmonton or Calgary), 2nd week of May (location to be determined)
- Secretariat to send an e-mail to members providing some dates.

Other Business

Council members were asked to review the Measuring Transfer Student Success documents for future discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.