

# Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

Adopted by Council  
June 11, 2007

## ACAT Meeting May 8-9, 2007 The King's University College - Edmonton

Present: Anna Kae Todd, Dietmar Kennepohl, Marylea Jarvis, Merla Bolender, Kathleen Massey, Catherine Eddy, Peter Haney, Fred Carnew, Olive Yonge, Doug Hart, Susan Radke (for Gord Nixon, Tuesday only), Lucille Walter (Chair), Marg Leathem (Director), Lisa Fox (Wednesday only) Maggie DesLauriers (Tuesday only), Wendy Richer, Corey Aloisio (Tuesday only)

Absent: Larry Hlushak, Carl Edozien, Dustin Fuller

The Chair welcomed Council to the fourth meeting of the 2006-2007 academic year and her final meeting as Chair.

### 1. Host Institution Opening Remarks

Dr. J. Harry Fernhout, President of The King's University College, brought greetings to Council and gave an overview of the University College.

### 2. Chair's Report

- As directed by Council, letters providing the finalized Principles, Policies and Procedures document as well as the "grandfathering" of their memberships were sent to DeVry Institute of Technology, Nunavut Arctic College, and Aurora College. E-mail notices were sent to all Vice-Presidents Academic of institutional members regarding the new procedures for application for membership to ACAT.
- Provided an update on the work of CAQC and their work on Pan-Canadian quality assurance as well as with INQAAHE.
- Articulation activities:
  - Computing Science articulation meeting scheduled for May 3 was postponed as the Universities of Alberta and Calgary have yet to meet to discuss a draft first-year core.
  - Math articulation meeting (scheduled for May 15) was postponed as there were few new developments since the meeting of March 30.
- Council was reminded of the upcoming May 16 PLAR Workshop.
- Advised that SIAST contacted ACAT for information on transferability of credit awarded by PLAR and whether there was a broad ACAT policy on transfer of such credits to Alberta institutions.
- Advised that the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT) membership numbers are increasing, and its next meeting is being held in June at PEI.
- Advised that a joint BC/Alberta Cabinet meeting is planned at which it is hoped that the Ministers will sign a covering document endorsing the joint BCCAT/ACAT Protocol document.

- Drew attention to BC's *Campus 2020* Report which provides recommendations for the future of post-secondary education, and particularly to Recommendations 30 and 31 which propose the expansion of the BC transfer system to include all those BC programs and institutions not currently covered.
- Advised that a review of all of the Alberta government's agencies, boards and commissions is underway and referred members to the Deputy Minister's letter dated April 10, 2007.
- The Chair and ACAT Director attended a First Nations Adult Higher Education Consortium (FNAHEC) meeting at Yellowhead Tribal College, where they learned about the University of Alberta First Nations' Library Initiative and the Lois Hole Digital Library and how these have assisted or will assist First Nations' colleges. The Chair suggested that the U of A provide a presentation on the First Nations Library Initiatives at the October meeting. Council agreed and indicated that FNAHEC would appreciate ACAT support. The Chair suggested that ACAT send a letter of support for the initiatives.

### 3. Secretariat Report

- Maggie DesLauriers was introduced and she outlined a number of ACAT projects with which she is involved.
- Wendy Richer provided an update on the progress of the 2007-2008 Alberta Transfer Guide. She advised that the transfer agreement statistical data included in the agenda binder indicates transfer agreement numbers, but indicated that these numbers do not alone provide an accurate measure of transfer agreement work being done by the institutions. Transfer agreement maintenance is very important, but not captured by these statistics.
- Contact with the institutions has increased and institution database training continues. Regional database training sessions were held prior to the Transfer Guide Production Process, which were timely, beneficial and well received by the institutions. Regional sessions will be held again next year.
- A number of system enhancements are being worked on and a system redesign may be considered for 2009.
- Effective May 3, 2007, Alliance University College and Nazarene University College became Ambrose University College.

### 4. Admission to the Transfer System

The final revision of ACAT's Principles, Policies and Procedures document was distributed. The Chair advised that the new information on application had been shared with both Newman Theological College and Red Crow Community College.

*Red Crow College Application* - The Chair noted that the admission application package from Red Crow Community College had arrived. Peter Haney was asked to speak to the letter of support from the University of Lethbridge and expand on its history and involvement with the college. Additionally, Kathleen Massey had an opportunity to summarize the University of Calgary's letter of support for Red Crow and outlined a number of initiatives and data in support of their proposed membership. It was decided that a sub-committee would be struck to review the application and that membership should include one person from a First Nations' college member. Subcommittee members include Catherine Eddy, Olive Yonge (or a designate), Fred Carnew, a representative from one of the member First Nations' colleges and a member of the Secretariat. Catherine Eddy was asked to chair this subcommittee and work with the Secretariat to set up the necessary meetings with the intent to bring a recommendation to Council at its October meeting. The Chair advised that at the FNAHEC meeting she had suggested that sharing the First Nations Accreditation Board principles, policies and procedures with Council and CAQC would assist those bodies in

understanding their process for ensuring quality and rigour. Council members asked that this matter be addressed at the October meeting.

Council discussed the significance of the contribution of the First Nations institutions in Alberta. Members felt that to get this perspective, ACAT needs to play a stronger role. Members discussed the possibility of creating a standing Aboriginal sub-committee to assist First Nations' colleges with admissions and transfer matters.

Council then turned to discussion on what constitutes being "a member in good standing". A number of criteria were identified as possible benchmarks:

- (1) flexibility within agreements, i.e., latitude within certificates, diplomas and degrees to allow for the granting of some unspecified credit;
- (2) responding to the Secretariat's requests for updating and keeping agreements current and accurate;
- (3) attendance at Contact Persons' meetings;
- (4) a commitment to having Council members attend ACAT meetings;
- (5) an institution's activity on the contact persons' site;
- (6) evidence of continual effort at establishing agreements;
- (7) currency of information in the Guide;
- (8) willingness to review credit transferability from specified institutions and presenting solid rationale for rejection;
- (9) willingness to grant generic or unspecified credit when there is not an exact course to course transfer;
- (10) evidence of very few actual student transfers either in or out.

Members then asked whether data could be collected that would give accurate information on whether an institution is actively committed to doing its part in the Transfer System.

Members agreed that this matter is important, and suggested that the Secretariat provide a yearly update on all of its member institutions and their performance on the criteria to Council in May of each year. The Secretariat agreed to work on these criteria and how they could be measured and that information would be shared with Council at a later meeting.

Council decided that a process to address membership in good standing needed to be formally developed and in the meantime the Chair would informally discuss transferability with the institutions as needed. The Secretariat will follow-up on developing criteria and set up draft benchmarks and proposed actions to be presented to Council at the a later meeting.

## 5. PLAR

ACAT's Director provided an update on the upcoming PLAR workshop on May 16<sup>th</sup> at the Fantasyland Hotel for which approximately 70 participants have registered. Regarding progress on the PLAR policy/framework, a Terms of Reference document has been developed and a Ministry working group established. An advisory committee will be established with representation from ACAT and institutional representatives, including First Nations institutions for the purpose of gathering feedback from stakeholders.

## 6. Aboriginal Institutions

An update was provided on Ministry support to First Nations Colleges. The Access to the Future Fund provided \$1.2 M among 6 First Nations colleges for matching scholarships and curriculum development. As well, funding was provided for the Lois Hole Digital Library Aboriginal component, and additional funds have been awarded to First Nations college students through a bursary program.

## 7. Annual Report

Council was asked to provide any comments or feedback on the draft 2006-2007 Annual Report. The item was moved by Dietmar Kennepohl, seconded by Kathleen Massey and all members were in favour that the Annual Report be adopted and submitted to the Minister.

CARRIED

## 8. Articulation Update

Janice Aubry (Team Leader, Languages, Alberta Education Curriculum Branch) provided an update on language curriculum changes and revisions. A number of school districts are implementing language requirements and students are acquiring new language proficiencies. Recently, there has been a flurry of Kindergarten entry-level and grade 4 entry-level language programs. By grade 4, half of all students have commenced a language program of studies. The programs are growing and Alberta Education is currently looking at diploma requirements. Many new programs have been established and renamed and Alberta Education is looking at proficiency standards. Council discussed the diverse competency levels of post-secondary entry-level students. Currently, there is no mandatory high school language requirement for post-secondary studies. Members suggested that a second language articulation committee be struck for Fall. It was suggested that there be representation from First Nations' colleges' members on that committee.

## 9. ACAT Consultation

The Chair summarized the consultation document and referred members to the recommendations coming out of the consultation. The following items were discussed:

### *Membership on Council*

- The Chair pointed out that the two largest colleges in Alberta (Mount Royal College and Grant MacEwan) have not participated as members during her two terms. There was discussion about whether or not this was a concern. It was decided that the four college/technical institution representatives take this forward to the next SAO group meeting. It was also suggested that the Chair send a letter to Robert Wilson who chairs the group asking that this item be discussed at the June meeting.
- A second issue with regard to membership was whether Council needed to be expanded to reflect representation from an Aboriginal college. After discussion about how Aboriginal members could best be represented, Dietmar Kennepohl moved that ACAT recommend to the Minister that a member be selected by FNAHEC to be from one of the institutions currently ACAT members. The item was moved by Dietmar Kennepohl, seconded by Kathleen Massey and all members were in favour.

CARRIED

- A third issue discussed was student representation on Council. Council unanimously reinforced the need for input from students on matters of admissions and transfer. Various means were discussed to get this input including:
  - annual student focus groups;
  - a survey which could be developed to gather their feedback and to gain an understanding of their experience with transfer;
  - collection of comments from the website.
- There was further discussion on the two student positions that exist on Council. Council agreed that the two student spots be reserved and that work and discussion on their representation/membership continue. The Chair will relay to the Minister the challenges with student participation and will continue to work with CAUS and ACTISEC on the matter.

*ACAT's Policy Advisory Role* - Another recommendation centered around ACAT's role in advising the Minister on policy matters which affect the Alberta Transfer System. There was discussion on the role of ACAT and members agreed that such discussion be a standing item on all future meeting agendas.

*Increased Resources for the Transfer System* - With regard to the need for increased financial support for the infrastructure of the Alberta Transfer System, members discussed the funding mechanisms in place for institutions. It was suggested that perhaps advice to the Minister could include reference to funding mechanisms that reward institutions that work with and recognize transfer and work collaboratively on initiatives. System coordination is important and needs to be recognized and rewarded. The Chair would like to advocate to the system that there be support for dedicated ACAT resources at each institution. Matters of concern are workload and keeping the data current in the transfer system.

*Other Items:*

- The Chair recapped the remaining items on the Consultation Recommendations document and advised that ACAT has already begun action on or will incorporate most items within its Business Plan.
- There was discussion on ACAT's role with respect to the advising chart on "Other Provinces' Grade 12-level Subjects Acceptable for Admission to Degree Granting Institutions". Members expressed frustration that there was no party responsible for the maintenance of this chart. The Chair suggested that perhaps PCCAT could play a role in this matter. Members also suggested a teleconference meeting among provincial representatives to discuss the currency of the data.

10. Other Business/Roundtable

The Chair has been invited to speak at Student Leadership Orientation on June 20 at 3:00 at Sterling Place in Edmonton. Since the Chair is not able to attend, Council members were asked to volunteer to make the presentation. Catherine Eddy and Doug Hart (alternate) volunteered.

There was group discussion on the just released Roles and Mandate document and a number of suggestions were made. It was decided that a response should be developed on behalf of ACAT on any of the matters that especially affect admissions and transfer. The Secretariat also noted that there would be a further consultation with stakeholders on August 21. The Director noted that individual institutions also were invited to respond on their own behalf. A response will be developed and circulated to members electronically for their approval and for comment.

Members presented a brief update on matters of admission and transfer from their institutions or sector.

11. Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair recapped a number of key accomplishments and events which had occurred over the last six years and thanked members for their hard work and dedication. She reinforced that Alberta has one of the best transfer systems in Canada and that this is the result of the environment of cooperation and collaboration that exists among the post-secondary institutions. The Chair also noted that many of the key accomplishments must be seen as "beginnings", not "ends" and that continual system improvement for the benefit of learners must always guide their goals and objectives for ACAT.

*Meeting adjourned at 12:00 Noon.*