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ACAT Council Meeting Minutes: May 27 – 28, 2014

MacEwan University

Rm 9-207, Robbins Health Learning Centre
Corner of 109 Street and 104 Avenue
Edmonton, AB

PRESENT:

Council Members:

Robin Fisher – Chair; Bob Boudreau – Vice Chair; Susan Bansgrove; Tessa Cocchio; William (Bill) Connor; Jim Gibbons; Larry Hlushak; Christine Johns; Emily Macphail; Madeline McVey (via conference call); Craig Monk; Helen Salzi; Marc Scholes; Jonathan Strand; Roy Weasel Fat

Government Resource Members: Patti Papirnik (Innovation and Advanced Education); Merla Bolender (Alberta Education)

ACAT Secretariat Staff: Ann Marie Lyseng; Eric Dohej; Jim Samide; Wendy Richer; Wendy Pruden (recorder)

Guests/Presenters: MacEwan University - Dr. David Atkinson, President and Kevin Shufflebotham, Director; Gord Johnston, Assistant Deputy Minister, Advanced Learning and Community Partnerships Division; Dietmar Kennepohl, Athabasca University; Sandy Henderson, Accountability, Compliance, and Data Collection; Jennifer Klepsch, Information and Technology Management; Jeanette Villeneuve, Aboriginal Education Articulation Committee Chair

Regrets: Susan Radke

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

- Round table introductions occurred.

Host – MacEwan University (MU):

- President David Atkinson welcomed attendees to the institution and provided a background/update on their initiatives. President Atkinson shared that Kevin Shufflebotham's ACAT admissions and transfer system experience has been very valuable to MU.
- President Atkinson stated that, based on his work in a number of jurisdictions, the Alberta transfer system and Transfer Alberta online search tool are the most comprehensive, effective and efficient. He highlighted that student behaviors are changing dramatically and that flexibility and continuous improvements to the system will be critical.

Guest – Gord Johnston, Assistant Deputy Minister:

- Mr. Johnston congratulated the new ACAT Chair and Council appointees.
- Bob Boudreau, Vice Chair, was thanked for his work during the re-appointment process.
- An update regarding the Campus Alberta system and institution capital projects was provided.
- A draft Campus Alberta Interim Plan was shared and discussed.
- The strong admissions and transfer work done by the ACAT Council over the past 40 years was acknowledged; it was shared that we need to celebrate our successes and look forward to the future.

- It was also shared that the system is complex with inherent challenges that require resources to meet the demands of learners; it was discussed that we will review/work together to identify how GOA can assist/resource needs.
- A system outcomes dialogue with the 26 publicly funded institutions was highlighted, including a key priority to broaden that discussion to evolve partnerships with all institutions in support of lifelong learning.
- Appreciation was expressed for the work of the Secretariat and Agencies Support Branch.
- A meeting with the ACAT Chair and Mr. Johnston will be scheduled during the next two weeks.

2. **Chair/Vice Chair Update**

- Bob Boudreau - Council last met in October 2013 at Bow Valley College. In November 2013, Ron Woodward completed his term as Chair. His accomplishments continue to inform Council's work and will shape ACAT for years to come. Welcome to Robin Fisher as ACAT's new Chair, previously an ACAT council member. A number of transitions have occurred in Council and the Ministry. The ACAT Secretariat has provided outstanding support over this transition period, ensuring Council's achievements and initiatives continued to move forward.
- Robin Fisher highlighted ACAT's ongoing activities and outlined the reporting structure of Council to the Ministry, recommending members become familiar with the *Principles, Policies and Procedures, Mandate and Roles*, and *Code of Conduct* governance documents.

3. **Innovation and Advanced Education Update and Presentations**

Ministry Update – Patti Papirnik:

- The divisional re-organization was discussed, resulting in the new Agencies Support Branch that now houses ACAT and CAQC in the ministry organizational structure.
- The *ALCP Update* document was distributed for information and highlights were noted
- It was discussed that this is an opportune time to consider/assess the purpose and direction of ACAT/advisory bodies in a collaborative and inclusive manner to support alignment with evolving Government of Alberta (GOA)/ministry strategic priorities.

System Outcomes and Indicators - Michelle Jehn:

- Handouts were provided and the Results Based Budgeting (RBB) work to date was discussed.
- A *learner enabled system* outcome that removes barriers and is all encompassing has emerged during the process as one of three key system outcomes (*value for investment, advancing knowledge, and a learner-enabled system*). These outcomes are built upon a systems outcomes framework that has been co-created by Campus Alberta institutions.

4. **Education Update and Presentation**

- An update on the Alberta Education *Curriculum Redesign* process and work to date was provided; focusing on cross- curricular competencies (core skills, literacy and numeracy) in a digital platform.
- A phased process is occurring and there are opportunities for Articulation Committee Chairs, ACAT Contact Persons, and Council to engage in the process; Merla and the Secretariat will follow-up to discuss how to best engage post-secondary/ACAT in this work; it was suggested to look at Articulation Committees and transition gaps from K-12 to university as part of the process.
- The Provincial Dual Credit Strategy process and work to date were discussed; the initiative has been very well received.
- A new *Education Act* will come into effect in September 2015, including increasing the age for student access to funding to 21.

5. **Council Orientation and Discussion**

Review of Council Orientation Package/Q&A

- An orientation package was distributed prior to the meeting.
- Highlights were reviewed, including governance documents and the roles of the Secretariat, Council, and the Ministry; a Q&A session occurred.
- Council Members were encouraged to review the Transfer Alberta (<http://alis.alberta.ca/ps/ep/aas/ta/transferralberta.html>) and ACAT websites (www.acat.gov.ab.ca), the *ACAT Update* document, key governance documents, and connect with the Secretariat if they have questions.

Media Update

- On behalf of Council, Jim Gibbons completed an on-air radio interview with QR770 in Calgary; the Alberta transfer system challenges, successes, and suggestions of how to ensure successful learner experiences were discussed. The Secretariat and Council thanked Jim for his work on this interview.

Student Groups Update

- ASEC and CAUS have been supportive of the work of ACAT and have identified issues that exist in the system, notably ASEC's 2013 and 2014 advocacy documents.
- Both ASEC and CAUS are involved on the Transfer Alberta Mobile App (a new tool in development) Advisory Group, which will begin to address some of the challenges in the system.
- The ACAT Secretariat will continue to involve the student groups in website redesign projects and other future activities.

Review of May 2013 ACAT Strategic Planning Session Priorities

- As a number of members are new to Council, the priorities set at the May 2013 strategic planning session were highlighted (see *July 2013 Spotlight* issue at <http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/Spotlight-July2013.pdf>).

Council 2013-2016 Action Plan

- ACAT goals and priority initiatives were reviewed and discussed (see <http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/ACAT-Council-Action-Plan-2013-16.pdf>). Given several factors, it

was agreed that the 2013-16 Action Plan is still current/relevant and should remain in effect for the 2014-15 year (ongoing).

October 2013 Meeting Items Arising (and ACAT Committees Update)

- An update on the work carried out by the Secretariat on behalf of Council since the October 2013 meeting was provided (see <http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/ACAT-Update-June-2014.pdf>).

Non-Alberta Transfer System Member Agreements Update

- This item was highlighted as a part of the ACAT Council orientation and update (see *November 2013 Spotlight* issue at <http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/Spotlight-Nov-2013.pdf>).

ACAT SharePoint Site Intro and Demo

- The newly developed SharePoint site was shared and discussed.
- Contact Persons, Articulation Committees, and Council will have separate pages in the SharePoint site to support their work, and will also have some shared pages, providing a location where greater communication can occur.
- With acknowledgement of expected initial technology and transition needs, this tool has been well received by Contact Persons and Articulation Committees. Access and training is in progress.
- Contact Persons used SharePoint to complete the 2014-15 updates to the upgrading and transfer charts.
- Articulation Committees will be able to use the site to take ownership of their committees, with support from the Secretariat.
- This tool provides a sustainable way to support the committees as we expand the articulation committee model in Alberta. It also provides the Contact Persons with easy access to Articulation Committee contact lists and information.
- Council will have its own specific page on the SharePoint site with secured access for Council members for Council contents; training for Council will be forthcoming.

2013-2014 Annual Report

- Due to a need for GOA confirmation of Council's recent appointments and re-appointments, completion of the final version of the 2013-14 Annual Report needed to be postponed; the new ACAT Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretariat will review and revise the draft report and share/approve the document with Council, estimated for August 2014.

6. ACAT Committees Update/Discussion/Approval

• Aboriginal Education Articulation Committee Presentation – Jeanette Villeneuve, Chair

- The committee wished to make the Council aware of a Federal Government funding change that is affecting First Nation institutions across Canada.
- This funding was initially reserved for Indigenous post-secondary institutions; it has now been opened to all institutions offering Aboriginal programming, including publicly funded institutions; this has severely diluted the primary source of funding for First Nations institutions across Canada.
- Letters have been written to Alberta institution colleagues respectfully requesting they do not access this fund, and the response has been very positive to this request to date.
- The committee asks Council to assist in creating awareness within the Ministry and among the post-secondary system in Alberta regarding this issue; Council is in agreement to assist with creating awareness and has requested from the committee any available data that can be provided to accurately and fairly inform possible awareness; information will be forwarded by the committee

to the ACAT Secretariat to share with the ACAT Chair to determine appropriate next steps regarding awareness/communication.

• **Learner Pathways Research Project Update – Dietmar Kennepohl, AU**

- The background of work to date on this project was provided, including discussion that has occurred with the Secretariat/Council and the Learner Pathways Sub-committee.
- A confidential draft of the research paper was provided for discussion purposes and highlights were discussed, including the recommended important role of Articulation Committees in learning outcomes and transfer.
- Council looks forward to an additional update and continued discussion at the Fall 2014 meeting.

• **Articulation Sub-committee – Marc Scholes, Chair**

- Articulation committees play a central role in supporting the system; there are currently 13 subject based committees composed of faculty experts and an Alberta Education representative.
- We propose continued expansion and request consideration today of a number of disciplines for committee creation.
- As the Secretariat has limited resources to support additional committees, to provide the infrastructure for further expansion, we have developed a SharePoint site; some committees are already using the tool to improve communication amongst their respective members and others are being introduced and trained during the coming months.
- Articulation Committee collaboration with BCCAT committees, who have a well-established articulation model, is providing valuable experiential information as we move forward.
- The development of articulation committees to meet the needs of Campus Alberta and a *learner enabled system* must include evidence based decisions that can only be obtained through research. This additional work will require financial support.
- Council requested that the Sub-committee, with the assistance of the Secretariat, do a feasibility study regarding tools needed to do the research and tool development to support the work of the Articulation Committee Model.
- Five proposals for new committees were discussed at length, including the interdisciplinary and broader nature of these proposals.
- Questions regarding how interdisciplinary committees could best be pursued and to what extent and in what ways could Alberta Education *Curriculum Redesign* and post-secondary needs be jointly and clearly addressed.
- Institutions, including SAIT and NAIT, have discussed with ACAT a need to facilitate mechanisms for sharing and dialogue regarding Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR).
- Discussions at the Canadian Association of Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA) 2013 conference also showed important interest in PLAR, as students are asking questions about assessment processes and if their PLAR credits will be recognized at another institution.
- It was raised that PLAR is included as a supported pathway in Council's *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* governance document, as is transition from high school to post-secondary.
- Dual credit was also discussed as an important high school to post-secondary pathway, with discussion about the best way to articulate this pathway and support post-secondary institutions and sustainability of course/program opportunities.
- Regarding five proposals for new committees, after much discussion it was:
 - **MOVED BY** Marc Scholes, seconded by Susan Bansgrove, that articulation committees be established in the three interdisciplinary areas of Sciences, Wellness and Social

- Sciences/Studies, with the function of advising *Curriculum Redesign* and exploring moving forward with committee members to identify if more specific articulation committees should be created from these 3 larger interdisciplinary committees. **CARRIED**
- **MOVED BY** Marc Scholes, seconded by Jonathan Strand that a Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) articulation committee be established. **CARRIED**
- Marc Scholes and the Secretariat were asked to follow up further with the Post-Secondary Dual Credit Coordinators representative to seek more information and determine possible next steps should this grassroots group/movement want to become an Articulation Committee.
- Council is also in favor of the minutes for the Articulation Committees being shared at the Senior Academic Officers meeting via Susan Bansgrove.
- While they are reviewing the Articulation Committee Model as a part of their work, the Articulation Sub-committee has also been asked to look at the definition of Articulation Committees and perhaps expand the language to be more inclusive (i.e. PLAR, Dual Credit, etc.).
- New Council members were identified for 3 Sub-committees requiring additional members; the Secretariat will assist in coordinating meetings for the following committees:
 - Articulation Sub-committee: Marc Scholes (Chair), Christine Johns, Larry Hlushak, Tessa Cocchio, Helen Salzl
 - Admissions Sub-committee: Jim Gibbons (Chair), Tessa Cocchio, Craig Monk
 - Learner Pathways Sub-committee: Susan Bansgrove (Chair), Jonathan Strand, Christine Johns, Helen Salzl.

ACAT SECRETARIAT UPDATE/DISCUSSION/APPROVALS

- The ACAT Secretariat and ministry guests provided highlights regarding the following ACAT work:
 - ACAT New Branding Update and 40th Anniversary Discussion/Feedback
 - [Spotlight Publication](#) Update and Discussion/Feedback
 - ACAT Roadmap and Technology Tools Update, Discussion/Feedback, and Next Steps
 - a. [Student Mobility Reports](#) – Guest: Sandy Henderson
 - b. [Transfer Alberta Mobile App](#) – Guest: Jennifer Klepsch
 - c. Website Redesign
 - [Dual Credit Update](#) and Next Steps – Strategy and Post-Secondary Dialogue
 - Pathways and Mobility Research Gaps Discussion and Next Steps
 - Pan-Canadian Update and Approvals:
 - a. [ONCAT Conference](#) and CATs Panel Session Update
 - b. PCCAT Update
 - i. CATs draft Memorandum of Understanding for Approval
 - ii. [June 18-19 Conference](#) (Quebec City), ACAT Participation, ACAT-led pan-Canadian Mobility Round Table, CATs Panel Session
 - iii. [ARUCC/PCCAT National Transcript Research Project Update](#)
 - c. [CAPLA Project](#) and [PLAR](#)

7. **ACAT Branding/40th Anniversary**

- The new branding development process and resulting logo was shared.
- The launch of the new branding is also timed as a celebration of ACAT's 40th anniversary; Robin Fisher and Bob Boudreau volunteered to work with the Secretariat to develop an "anniversary/branding launch event" and strategy for the Fall; suggestions are welcome.

8. **Spotlight Publication**

- This publication has a wide distribution to system stakeholders and has been well received by the system.
- It is the Council's communication to the system and partners to share the work of Council and highlight initiatives, system success/issues stories, system highlights, etc.
- Next steps discussion occurred.

9. **ACAT Roadmap & Technology Tools Update/Discussion/Feedback/Next Steps**

- Jennifer Klepsch demonstrated the ACAT mobile app. The app is in development in collaboration with an Advisory Group, including a number of stakeholders (e.g., student groups, Contact Persons, student advisors). The app has been very well received by students and other system stakeholders, as well as by Council. Jennifer and her ITM team were commended for their exemplary work with the Secretariat on this project.
- A draft communications plan to launch the tool has been prepared by the ministry and will be discussed with the ACAT Chair.

10. **Dual Credit Update**

- In addition to the previous discussion during the Education update, the Secretariat highlighted the revised www.albertadualcredit.ca website; discussed key information regarding student opportunities, post-secondary collaboration, and the role of the Steering Committee; and shared the list of approved partnerships to date under the Provincial Dual Credit Strategy.

11. **Pathways and Mobility Research Gaps Discussion and Next Steps**

- Sandy Henderson provided a follow-up to the May 2013 Council session regarding new ACAT student mobility reporting, including use of system LERS data and future ways to leverage the collected data for other reports/requests; the new reports have been well received to date. Sandy's team, including Rob Acker and Stephanie Chen, were commended for their work on the new reports.
- As of December 2013, the ACAT website contains three new student mobility reports (by institution and sector), with the data able to be used in a variety of ways at the institutions' discretion.
- Additional student mobility reports are under discussion, including University Transfer program data, high school transitions, and dual credit.
- Regarding mobility reporting, at this time, we can only capture data in the six sector model, but are looking at how to expand and work towards an open data model in the future.

12. **Pan-Canadian Update and Approvals**

ONCAT and PCCAT Conferences and CATs Panel Sessions Update

- At the suggestion of Wendy Pruden, the first CAT panel occurred at the 2013 PCCAT Conference; it was so well received that the ONCAT conference organizers requested it be a part of their agenda to share the work of the four CATs (British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and New Brunswick).
- The panel resulted in a number of questions and interest by Ontario (ONCAT), who requested continued dialogue resulting in another CATs panel. A CATs panel also occurred at the PCCAT conference in

2014 and will also occur in New Brunswick at their ministry/stakeholder meeting in the fall. Further, at the PCCAT conference, a pan-Canadian roundtable was led by ACAT to discuss how to best support pan-Canadian student mobility. The session was positively received by participants the discussion is anticipated to continue virtually.

- ACAT is a partner, along with the other CATs, in The PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project.
- Wendy Pruden, as a PCCAT Director, encouraged Council to attend the June 18-19 conference in Quebec City, themed Collaboration & Communication in Support of Credit Transfer and Student Mobility. All details can be found on the new PCCAT website (see <http://pccatweb.org/pccat/>).

CAPLA Project and PLAR

- Alberta is participating in a federally funded project, led by the Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA), that's looking at Recognition of Prior Learning assessment and how to create guidelines and tools for practical application by all. More information can be found in ACAT's Update document and at CAPLA's project site (see <http://capla.ca/quality-assurance/>).
- Alberta (via Ann Marie Lyseng/ACAT Secretariat) is represented on the CAPLA's RPL Advisory Panel. Council is welcome to share in the project information and to help inform the project, including at an upcoming August 27, 2014 CAPLA project webinar and discussion.

13. Next Meeting Date/Location

- Dates: October 14, 15 and 16, 2014 are to be researched for possible collaboration and successive meetings with Council, the Contact Person's Annual Meeting, an ACAT 40th anniversary celebration, and possibly the ACAT Articulations Committee Chair/Vice-Chair Annual Meeting.
- Location: Alberta College of Art + Design

Adjournment: 3:30 p.m.