

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

11th Floor, Commerce Place, 10155 – 102 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 4L5
 Phone: (780) 422-9021 Fax: (780) 422-3688 e-mail: acat@gov.ab.ca

Meeting Name	Location	Date
Sociology Articulation Committee	University of Lethbridge Room A572, in University Hall	November 1, 2013 (10:00AM-2:00)
Facilitator:		Recorder:
Chair: Dr. Tami Bereska, Grant MacEwan University		Teleconference Info: Toll-free dial in: 1-866-792-1317 Conference id. : 7187343

Committee Members to Attend		Accepted	Attended
1.	Efa Etoroma – Concordia University College		
2.	Choon-Lee Chai– Red Deer College		
3.	Tom Buchanan – Mount Royal University		
3.	Ellen McBride- Medicine Hat College		
4.	Herbert Northcott – Univeristy of Alberta		
5.	Gillian Ranson – University of Calgary		
6.	Muriel Mellow – University of Lethbridge		
7.	Tony Simmons- Athabasca University		

ACAT Secretariat Staff to Attend		Accepted	Attended
1.	Jim Samide		
2.	Eric Dohei, ACAT Manager		

AGENDA		Time Allotted
1.	Welcome – TBD	
2.	Introductions	
3.	ACAT	
4.	Institution Updates	
5.	Learning outcomes & transfer credit	
6.	Transferring courses from outside of sociology	
7.	Terms of Reference review	
8.	Next Steps	
8.	Next Meeting Time/Location	

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9.	Adjournment	
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Meeting Notes

1. Welcome	Tami welcomed committee members and ACAT representative, Jim Samide.
2. Introductions	Everyone introduced themselves.
3. ACAT	<p>Jim Samide was joined by Anne-Marie Lyseng (Senior Manager, ACAT Secretariat)</p> <p>Described the structure and role of ACAT.</p> <p>ACAT Secretariat update.</p> <p>July: <i>Spotlight Communications</i> newsletter was launched. It can be viewed on the ACAT website (www.acat.ab.ca). Feedback on the newsletter is welcomed.</p> <p>A variety of informational supports are available for the work of the articulation committees (e.g. from the Learning Outcomes Committee).</p> <p>The ACAT Secretariat is in the process of recruiting a new chair to replace Ron Woodward, whose term is ending.</p> <p>A 2013 action plan is currently being drafted. New articulation committees include math and studio-based disciplines.</p> <p>ACAT has a new member, Columbia College (Calgary).</p> <p>There are several new subcommittees: admissions; learner pathways (i.e., outcomes; block transfers); articulation (i.e., best practices).</p>
4. Institution Updates	<p><u>Mount Royal University</u> Has 75-80 sociology majors, and 30 anthropology majors (in a joint sociology/anthropology department).</p> <p>Has an upcoming program review planned.</p> <p>Gender is a strength in the sociology program. Research methods is another strength; three methods courses are required (introductory; qualitative; and quantitative). A capstone course (Intersections) is also required.</p> <p><u>Medicine Hat College</u> Sociology exists within a department of social sciences and humanities.</p>

In sociology, there are 2 full-time and 1 part-time instructor. MHC has some baccalaureate programs, as well as university transfer. There are some block transfers to the University of Lethbridge (e.g., addictions and counselling).

MHC offers 15-18 sociology courses, with a strong criminology block.

Concordia University College

Previously, Concordia offered a 3-year BA degree. This year, they have also implemented a 4-year BA degree program.

There are 68 students doing a concentration in sociology (i.e., equivalent to a “major”), and another 82 doing the equivalent of a “minor.”

There are three full-time faculty, as well as three sessional instructors.

Sociology is going to be merged into a new department of social sciences.

There are concerns among faculty and staff at Concordia about what types of changes may be necessary due to government budget cuts.

University of Lethbridge

U of L has 127 students doing a major in sociology.

Recently, there has been considerable growth in graduate studies in sociology.

There are some curriculum changes being proposed, to provide greater systemization in the sociology program: a second-year course in social inequality; a second-year course in “doing sociology” (i.e., about applying sociological knowledge); and a third-year course in the sociology of work (which was previously a second-year course).

Red Deer College

RDC is primarily a transfer institution. However, there is a collaborative degree program with the University of Calgary, which enables students to do their entire sociology degree at RDC; there are approximately 30 students in that program.

A curriculum review has just been completed.

Community-service learning opportunities are available.

Working on a growing relationship with Mount Royal.

University of Calgary

There are approximately 500 sociology majors, which has been trending upwards.

Government budget impacts have had a significant impact. Admissions are being restricted across the board. Because of retirements and fewer faculty resources, “concentrations” for sociology students have had to be eliminated (except for the concentration in criminology).

There is a new interdisciplinary “law and society” program.

In the near future, there will be a distinct “Faculty of Arts.”

University of Alberta

There are approximately 400 sociology majors, and 600 minors, as well as 2 honours students.

Community-service learning is available in some courses.

The sociology department has been experiencing increasing enrollments, yet a decline in faculty numbers (due to retirements and difficulties in hiring sessional instructors). Consequently, there has been an impact on course offerings, especially at the 400-level.

Athabasca University

Sociology has 3 faculty members and 10 “tutors.”

In addition to the effects of government cutbacks in terms of programs being offered, another challenge sociology is currently facing is in debates between the “geeks” and the “dinosaurs.” One of the areas of debate is over course offerings—short-term “hot topic” courses versus longer-term “classic” courses that might not initially draw as many students.

Lakeland College

Sociology has one full-time faculty member. This is a brand new position; sociology courses were previously taught by people local to the community, who normally would not even have Masters degrees.

Lakeland offers a combination of university transfer and diploma programs.

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	<p>There are approximately 160 students taking sociology classes.</p> <p>A primary concern for Lakeland is the transferability of their courses. The preference would be to confirm the specific transfer credits that would be offered <u>prior to</u> implementing a new course.</p> <p><u>Grant MacEwan University</u> MacEwan University has been offering its own BA degree since 2006.</p> <p>There approximately 500 students doing either a major or a minor in sociology, as well as a couple of honours students in any given year.</p> <p>Sociology majors can pursue a general program of study in sociology, or choose one of two specializations: criminology; or family, youth, and diversity. Students specializing in criminology have the option of doing a Community-Based Criminology Project in their fourth year; they are paired with a public, private, or non-profit organization related to the criminal justice system, and then carry out a research, analytical, or evaluative project for that organization. In the coming years, it is expected that a similar course will be offered for sociology students outside of criminology as well.</p>
5. Learning Outcomes and Transfer Credit	<p>There was a discussion of the role that learning outcomes play, in practice, in evaluating transfer credit.</p> <p>There is some variability among institutions in the emphasis placed on learning outcomes. In some institutions, the emphasis on learning outcomes is growing. For example, Concordia is embarking on a project to develop formal learning outcomes for all sociology courses, reflected in what may be considered master course syllabi. Other institutions that already had these standard documents are in the process of moving away from them (or have already done so) (e.g. University of Calgary; MacEwan University). The primary criticism of these documents is that in order to protect academic freedom and the myriad of ways in which a particular sociology course can be taught, the learning outcomes had to be so generic, they were rendered relatively meaningless.</p> <p>Committee members completed a short, informal survey on the extent to which they consider learning outcomes versus specific course content when evaluating transfer credit. In the results of the survey and subsequent discussion, there was agreement that there is some level of overlap between the two. However, course content tends to be the primary lens through which transfer credit is evaluated. Specific assessment techniques, assigned readings, and lecture outlines are</p>

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	<p>better indicators of the particular body of knowledge and set of skills that students will have coming out of a sociology course.</p> <p>Anne-Marie Lyseng voiced a particular interest in this discussion, and stated that she may be in touch in the future for more information.</p>
6. Transferring Courses from Outside of Sociology	<p>Because some institutions offer a wider range of programs than others, there is variability in the extent to which sociology departments receive transfer credit requests for courses outside of sociology (e.g., women's studies; aboriginal studies; human services). Those committee members who do encounter such requests judge them on an individual basis. Some of those courses are granted a generic credit (e.g., SOCI 2xx), while others are rejected because of insufficient sociological content.</p>
7. Terms of Reference Review	<p>After one year with the current Terms of Reference, it was agreed that they would be carried over for another year.</p> <p>Committee members acknowledged the value of sharing information during these annual meetings, as well as having a concrete network of contacts for transfer credit questions that might arise. However, a question was posed about whether there was any larger purpose to these articulation committees, and whether the provincial government has a specific underlying interest.</p>
8. Next Steps	<p>Committee members will review the Terms of Reference in preparation for the 2014 meeting.</p>
9. Next Meeting Time/Location	<p>The 2014 meeting will be held between mid-October and mid-November, although not immediately before Halloween. Committee members suggested that a more central location might enable more committee members to physically attend the meeting. Consequently, the 2014 meeting has been tentatively scheduled for MacEwan University.</p>