

**WestCAT Fall 2014 Meeting Minutes  
University of Saskatchewan  
University Club, 101 Administration Place  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**

**9:00 am to 3:30 pm  
October 7, 2014**

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**Members:**

<i>Arnold Boldt, Chair</i>	<i>Saskatchewan Polytechnic</i>
<i>Danelle Reiss</i>	<i>Government of Saskatchewan</i>
<i>Philip Cameron</i>	<i>Government of Saskatchewan</i>
<i>Bob Turner</i>	<i>Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)</i>
<i>Kathy Larsen</i>	<i>Saskatchewan Polytechnic</i>
<i>Grant MacTavish</i>	<i>Saskatchewan Polytechnic</i>
<i>Barb Gustafson</i>	<i>Saskatchewan Polytechnic</i>
<i>Patricia McDougall</i>	<i>University of Saskatchewan</i>
<i>Alison Pickrell</i>	<i>University of Saskatchewan</i>
<i>Jim Darcy</i>	<i>University of Regina</i>
<i>Rob Adamoski</i>	<i>BCCAT</i>
<i>Rob Fleming</i>	<i>BCCAT</i>
<i>John FitzGibbon</i>	<i>BCCAT</i>
<i>Roger Barnsley</i>	<i>BCCAT</i>
<i>Mike Winsemann</i>	<i>BCCAT</i>
<i>Robin Fisher</i>	<i>ACAT</i>
<i>Ann Marie Lyseng</i>	<i>ACAT</i>
<i>Dave Neale</i>	<i>Campus Manitoba</i>
<i>Anita Ratnam</i>	<i>Campus Manitoba</i>
<i>Kim Grenier Mintenko</i>	<i>Campus Manitoba</i>
<i>Linda Lyons</i>	<i>Recorder, Saskatchewan Polytechnic</i>

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**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Arnold Boldt, Chair welcomed members and round table introductions took place. Arnold Boldt thanked the University of Saskatchewan for hosting this event.

**2. Review and approval of agenda**

Motion: Grant MacTavish moved that the agenda be adopted as presented. Danelle Reiss seconded. Carried.

**3. Review of meeting notes from October 8, 2013 meeting in Calgary.**

The minutes of the October 8, 2013 meeting were accepted as presented.

**4. Round Table: Update on Learner Pathways and Student Mobility – related initiatives in the four provinces**

**British Columbia:**

Rob Fleming reported that the workplan is available for distribution if anyone would like one. Mr. Fleming focused on specific projects that they will be working on in this year:

- Potential changes to graduation requirements to grade 12.
  - Currently in the early stages of discussion regarding the process with the secondary system. He reported that there are potential implications for admission decisions. He added that he expects this to be a three or four year process.
- Looking at admission categories and how institutions actually admit students and how the decisions are made. There is research being done on this.
- Increase information on transfer credit awards; getting information out there. There is a lot of research around mobility; who assesses when and for what purposes.
- Two-year project for the international student survey lead by Rob Adamoski. Working on collaboration with the institutions to get the survey out to the students. The information compiled will support the work of the project. The government has used this as a focus of economic development and a lot of direction is coming from international students.
- Will be coming out with a paper on what is academic credit. This discussion is occurring in the United States as well as Canada.
- Research on dual admissions agreements. Mr. Fleming reported that he would be happy to share and consult with the information that they have.
- Currently compiling data on why do student's move? Data should be out shortly.
- Revisiting the profile report. Working on compiling student performance data. Currently working on an aggregate report that includes course level information of how students transfer from one institution to another.
- Academic advising and career path environment. Will be submitting a call for proposals followed up with a RFP involving a review of the literature and some of the issues at play with recommendations. Depending on the topic, this will reflect the BC experience but may reference other institutions outside of that province.
- Website re-development of transfer guide site will be renewed.
- Fair amount of energy on working interprovincial. Ontario and Alberta/BC will be holding a meeting for transfer credit and efficiencies across these provinces. Want to work with the willing institutions.
- Associate degree (framework is on the website). British Columbia is the only Canadian institution with an arts transfer and science transfer and allows complete autonomy and functionality. Looking at developing a third associate degree model to allow institutions more latitude.
  - Bob Turner, WICHE, commented on the range of degrees. He understands the utility and use of the associate degrees, however, very few students actually accomplish this degree. The associate degree may be useful at the surface but are used by a small number of students and is more complex than doing 2-year block and then another 2-year block.
  - The Degree Act in Saskatchewan does recognize associate degrees.
  - Additional discussion surrounded the flexibility and advantages of learning outcome based programs.
- Launched the BCCAT transfer credit award system. This will recognize individuals that are making the difference and give back to the institutions. It is important to recognize the champions in all of the provinces systems.

## **Alberta**

Robin Fisher provided the following highlights:

- Will be celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAT.
- Document Learner Pathways and Student Mobility in Alberta document was distributed
- Robin Fisher is now the chair of ACAT, following Rob Woodward.

- Developed an app that will access the transfer system on mobile devices which will be launched next week.
- Redeveloped the website and revising the database that houses all the articulation agreements.
- Conducting a renovation of system tools.
- Working on the development of articulation committees. Currently there are 17 committees.
- Engaging faculty in discussion about transfer credit and some of the articulation committees are communicating across provincial borders.
- Provincial dual credit strategy. ACCAT is also responsible for Prior Learning Assessment. Discussions are taking place whether the PLAR people will also become the dual credit articulation committee.
- Currently being reviewed by the Ministry and look at this an opportunity to open the dialogue with the Ministry about ACCAT. The quality council is also being reviewed.
- In Alberta, as in BC, we have a student identifier that follows the student throughout their education career (from K to post-secondary). This is helpful for tracking student mobility and how students are moving through the Alberta system. Focused on student mobility rather than transfer credit. Would like to expand on this to include more data especially on transfer credit. There are some data gaps.
- Created dual credit identifiers to show credit on both sides.
- Received recent funding for the collaboration with other institutions.

### **Saskatchewan**

Danelle Reiss reported last year in February 2013 there was an action committee formed on Growth and Sustainability that includes representatives from the Ministry of Advanced Education all post-secondary institutions within the province. The province wanted to work on credit transfer and learning pathways, and as part of this they developed a subsequent committee on Credit Transfer and Learning Pathways to work collaboratively on problems of common interest. The sub-committee developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU). Some of the guiding principles of the MOU include:

- Moving students through the intuitional systems in quickly and fairly and improve mobility and overall satisfaction of the students. This was the basis of this relationship and is continuing to work together on initiatives.

A working group was formed from the Credit Transfer & Learning Pathways Committee, chaired by Alison Pickrell, to move forward on initiatives. The working group is exploring ways to collaborate with other institutions, particularly in Western Canada. Examining ways of moving forward with student mobility is a priority. There is currently a high level of interest with institutions, and the government, which will help to create sustainability within the province.

- Some of the work of the committees involves an analysis of the three major institutions websites related to transfer credit. The goal is to create a common agreement of the elements that we all want to have on our website, together with common language, and to try to align our institutions with definitions. We are completing an inventory of transfer credit agreements to bring them together in a common way. We will have an inventory created very shortly and this will be housed on a common page on the government website. This will create a common landing for transfer credit in Saskatchewan.
- Currently involved in discussions with the parent committee and the working group on moving forward as a province without a SaskCAT or align with another province. Looking at creating partnerships so we are creating recommendations to the parent committee to be completed by November 30, 2014. The government is an active partner in this project. They are part of the parent committee and the working group.
- It was noted that when the recommendations become public, the WestCAT members would be interested in receiving the outcomes.

- Grant MacTavish, Saskatchewan Polytechnic reported that work is done on developing dual credit and thanked the other institutions for helping develop our process. Six courses will be piloted in the near future. Some of the institutions from ACCAT have agreed to share their templates for dual credit.

## **Manitoba**

Dave Neale, Campus Manitoba provided a presentation on the Manitoba initiatives:

- Would like to see some bridging between colleges and universities and vice versa.
- Redeveloped their platform and launched their e-Campus Manitoba in May where MBtransfer.ca was created. E-Campus houses all the online courses from each institution in the province.
- Exploring Open Educational Resources
- MBTransfer: Will be collaborating with other institutions on how a pan-provincial collaboration may work into the development of a transfer credit system.
- Manitoba does not have a CAT. Exploration is taking place as to how we want to be organized.
- Would like to see a transfer credit database up in 2015 but will need the buy-in from other institutions. There has been some interest from partners and some time has been spent with them to understand mutual needs.

Question: Will a CAT emerge since Saskatchewan is also struggling with this piece?

## **5. Transfer System Re-design (*presentations by ACAT/BCCAT*)**

- 180,000 transfer courses in the databases.
- Evaluation of the articulation is done electronically. WestCAT members were informed that they are welcome to use BCCAT model to build their own transfer system. Some of the data is available through a web service for institutions that want to pull their data from their website. This ensures consistent information across the provinces.
- Degree audit function. The registrar of the institution makes sure the information is updated. The hope is to launch this site this month. Would like to do some student focus groups to make sure that the site is meeting the needs of the student.

### *ACCAT presentation*

- ACCAT representatives provided a presentation on the transfer credit app for mobile devices. Eric Dohei demonstrated how the app works. The app is built on functionality for the high school students as well as post-secondary. Rebranded to Transfer Alberta is part of a broader ministry website. Takes information from the TARS system. Hoping to have the APP available by October 15, 2014.

## **6. PCCAT**

### *6.1 Update: Dave Neale*

Dave Neale provided a brief update of PCCAT 2014. He added that the PCCAT for 2015 will take place in Windsor, ON. The call for proposals will be out within the next month. Mr. Neale added that a strategic planning committee has been formed to develop a strategic plan for PCCAT. Bob Turner requested that he be included in the call for proposals so that he can disseminate the information.

### 6.2 *Transfer Guide Project discussion/opportunities: Rob Fleming/Rob Adamoski*

Rob Fleming and Rob Adamoski provided a presentation based on the research done in the last year that supports improved mobility of students between institutions and enhancement that create efficiencies. The research was jointly funded by PCCAT and ARUCC. A copy of the report was distributed to members.

- Research is well done which examines ways forward for a higher degree of alignment of how we assess and discuss transcript.
- Recommendations:
  - develop and enhance the transfer credit guide, there is still quite a bit of support for the principles and just need alignment.
  - Create a national transfer credit guide so that we can align our language.
  - Build a communication plan.
- Will be seeking funding from other institutions.
- The first phase is the validation phase and will focus in on important changes in the guide. Then a draft of the guide, confirmed, validated and translated. The outcome is tangible that will benefit a lot of groups but are looking for some support.
- ARUCC and PCCAT are seeking funding for the final phase – the creation of a national standards guide on transcription and a credit transfer glossary for Canada's post-secondary sector.

## 7. Discussion on the use of learning outcomes in transfer credit and the WICHE model

Bob Turner, WICHE, presented the WICHE model and the use of learning outcomes in transfer credit at the October 6, 2015 Research Symposium at the University of Saskatchewan. Discussion took place regarding some of the advantages of the learning outcome model in transfer credit. Mr. Turner reviewed the use of learning outcomes in transfer credit and the WICHE model:

- Make people aware and craft the project to make it as comfortable as possible for people.
- It is a mistake to make this a top-down effort; sustainability comes through engagement.
- In his experience, the people need to be engaged for this to work.
- Robin Fisher, the Alberta system, commented that one of the challenges is that we have a system that is based on systems. What argument did you make to get buy in?
  - Mr. Turner: If we are not looking at how prepared transfer students are; how do we know? Wouldn't you rather know that the students are coming in proficient? Appeal to the faculty's higher vision of themselves. Why are you doing this? Is it because you want to teach students? If it is then give this model some consideration?

Mr. Turner thanked the group for the invitation.

## 8. CAT MOU Potential Protocol Development among other jurisdictions – Interprovincial Transfer Project (Rob Fleming/Robin Fisher)

The MOU was distributed with the agenda package. Rob Fleming reported that the MOU will be finalized on October 15, 2015. One of the key goals is to enhance transfer credit and student mobility by recognizing credit across the provinces while creating collaborative relationships.

Robin Fisher shared that we want to do what we can to leverage our practices about research and share this with other provinces. He added that the MOU is quite promising.

## 8.2 Relationship among Articulation Committees across provinces

The relationship with the ACAT and BCAT:

- Usually meet by videoconference and some of the articulation committees meet with each other's institution committees.
- Started to talk about a protocol for the sciences articulation committee.
- Creating and building relationships with other committees.
- Looks at how other committees would fit in PLA for example; Western Canadian Articulation Committee
- BCCAT does fund the chairs to attend some of these functions.

John FitzGibbon reported that as part of the research on articulation committees we started by explaining the articulation process and why articulation committee exist. This provided an insight into the culture. The questions that are being asked are related to why articulation committees exist (purpose) and the costs to the institutions associated with articulation committees. The results of the research will be published next month.

## 8.3 Relationship among Research Plans /Shared opportunities across provinces

Ann Marie Lyseng, ACAT, reported that there are currently Alberta funds available through the Conference Board of Canada for a one page proposal for key research or gaps. The goals are Pan-Canadian Gaps and Interprovincial Mobility. Ann asked the members to consider this funding opportunity by identifying key research (or gaps) that we all share that may form the basis for a proposal.

- Rob Amdaoski reported that they just released our research plan for 2014-15 that have some interprovincial relevance.
- It was suggested to start with a core, or a case study, perhaps collecting data on student mobility. BC is now able to track students and the number of courses they are transferring and where they are transferring to. There is some potential to do something here but would be at the institutional level.
  - Alison Pickrell commented that if we undertake the data of how our students are doing, is there additional work that could be done in this area that would strengthen the proposal? She added that transfer students do well, if not better. Perhaps more work can be done in this area and we can pick areas where we know our students are doing well within our province. We know where our students are coming from and, institutionally, we know how they are but we don't know how they are doing when they transfer out; a transfer student profile and performance report.
  - The challenge will be that the data is in different forms from each institution and perhaps a template would need to be developed which may take some time.
  - BC will need to look at the capacity to handle this type of proposal. It would require heavy involvement to develop a model that is used consistently across the western provinces.

It was decided that a small working group be formed involving ACAT, BCAT, University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina to complete a meta-analysis of student transfer data. Manitoba expressed interested in partnering on this proposal, however, at this time they do not have the resources to support the collection of data.

Ann Marie Lyseng will confirm the deadline for submission of the proposals and will arrange passwords for Sharepoint for the working group.

## 9. Other Business

Grant MacTavish will send out the members list to the BCCAT members.

Arnold Boldt, thanked all members for participating in this years' WestCAT and gave a special thank you to those all those who contributed their time presenting and organizing the Symposium.

**10. Next Meeting – Date/Location**

BCCAT will host the 2015 WestCAT in Vancouver. Details will follow. Manitoba will host the 2016 WestCAT.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

