

# WestCAT Fall 2013 Annual Meeting

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**Orientation Dinner: Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 6:30 – 8:30 pm**

**Meeting: Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm**  
Location: Bow Valley College (Calgary)  
(Continental Breakfast 8:30 a.m., Lunch 12:00 p.m.)

**Attendees:**

Ron Woodward	Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT)
Ann Marie Lyseng	ACAT Secretariat, Enterprise and Advanced Education
Eric Dohei	ACAT Secretariat, Enterprise and Advanced Education
Wendy Pruden	ACAT Secretariat, Enterprise and Advanced Education
Rob Fleming	British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT)
John FitzGibbon	British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer
Rob Adamoski	British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer
Danelle Reiss	Government of Saskatchewan, Ministry of Advanced Education
Patricia McDougall	University of Saskatchewan
Grant MacTavish	Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST)
David Neale	Campus Manitoba

**Regrets:**

Alison Pickrell	University of Saskatchewan REGRETS
Kim Browning	The Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE), Manitoba REGRETS
Ray Karasevich	The Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE), Manitoba REGRETS

## **MEETING AGENDA—October 8**

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### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

- ACAT Chair, Ron Woodward thanked attendees for travelling to Alberta to participate in this annual meeting.
- Round table introductions were conducted.
- Sharon Carry, President and CEO of host institution, Bow Valley College (BVC), welcomed attendees and explained the background and unique initiatives/partnerships occurring between BVC and other institutions in support of Campus Alberta. BVCs vision is to support the learner's experience "*anytime, anyplace, any path, at any pace*". The goal is for learners to have a true seamless pathway with no rework or dead end in their programming.
- Anna Kae Todd, Vice-President, Learning, and former ACAT Council member also welcomed delegates and described BVCs involvement with Alberta's dual credit initiative and encouraged attendees to do a walkabout of the institution.

### **2. Review & Approval of Agenda**

- The meeting agenda was reviewed and approved as distributed.

### **3. Review of Meeting Notes from September 20th, 2012 Annual Meeting in Vancouver**

- There being no errors or omissions, the 2012 Annual Meeting minutes were approved as circulated.

#### 4. General Update on Learner Pathways and Student Mobility-Related Initiatives in the Four Provinces, including:

- **Saskatchewan:**

- A re-organization is happening within the Saskatchewan Advanced Education ministry. Support for student mobility is a high priority for the ministry.
- Developing a common set of principles and continued collaboration between the University of Saskatchewan, University of Regina and SIAST is a priority. This is a driver for the development of a new policy document focusing on learner pathways, learning outcomes, transfer and mobility, and innovative programs and services.
- Transfer credit guidelines development is underway. Any sharing of the BC and AB experience is welcome.
- Inter-provincial transfers are increasing for a variety of reasons, notably from Alberta to Saskatchewan. Building connectivity among the provinces is important as demographic realities are impacting choices being made by learners about their post-secondary pathways. This is influencing decision and planning initiatives within the system.
- SIAST has built a transfer structure based on the BC model and is in the review process.
- Publishing course transferability and listing partnerships between provincial and inter-provincial partners is critical for the learner when choosing their pathway.

- **British Columbia:**

- BCCAT distributed and discussed an update report on activities and initiatives being conducted by BCCAT. (attached)
- Additional research into USA and European transfer policies, as well as BCCAT experience, has shown that building trust and agreement regarding parity of status and quality of education for equivalent programming at different institutions is critical to create effective transfer.
- BC course evaluations for transfer credit take a broader look at matching outcomes, competencies, and course outline analysis. They don't include instructor qualifications as this is addressed in the BCCAT best practices statement. Student success has resulted in faculty system agreement.
- BCCAT is reviewing the past 20 years of UBC transfer assessment data and hoping to be able to share it publicly. Data focus will be on course level data moving to University of British Columbia.
- The BC transfer system is well established (25 years next year), includes public and private institution members, over 60 system-led articulation committees, block and by-course transfer agreements, and a common student number (PEN) among secondary/post-secondary.
- In Saskatchewan, parity of status for courses is possible, but institutions don't always teach the same way or agree on equivalencies. BC addressed non-parity through data sharing, encouragement and advice regarding mobility resulting in the issue somewhat resolving itself over an extended period of time.
- BC shared and discussed several resource materials. *A Survey of Movers* publication attempts to determine richer information about why learners transfer. The result is that there needs to be both block transfer and course-by-course articulations to make the system work. Block transfer agreements are especially helpful for those students who plan ahead, with by-course agreements often highly

beneficially for students who have less linear paths with various factors affecting their need for mobility and transfer.

- **Manitoba**

- System history and recent changes in Campus Manitoba were discussed. Government is putting a high priority on mobility and transfer. A Memorandum Of Understanding between the Advanced Education Minister and institutions to improve student mobility was signed in 2012.
- Various databases are being merged into a central database and one eCampus access point via Campus Manitoba.
- April 26, 2013 began the restructuring of the virtual platform for on-line course delivery to enable students to transfer credits and programs between institutions. An online transfer credit database is projected to go public in 2014. Phase 2 will establish a standard transfer credit evaluation process.
- Governance currently not legislated; working on identifying more formal authority and transfer system.

- **Alberta:**

- Supporting learner pathways, transfer, and mobility are key priorities for the Enterprise and Advanced Education Ministry and Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT).
- Communication with learners is the key to the success of planning their pathways. The *Transfer Alberta Search Tool* is one important tool, with another—*Transfer Alberta App*, in development. This is a mobile app to assist with easy access to information about transferability of by-program and by-course options, as well as high school equivalency information.
- ACAT is reviewing current data collection and exploring the types of research data available that can be customized for specific information to use for planning purposes. ACAT is also identifying current research gaps, including transfer credit awarded, interprovincial mobility, and dual credit.
- ACAT is also discussing tracking data for learners in key programs (e.g., dual credit) from the K-12 to post-secondary systems using Alberta's common student number (ASN) that is shared between K-12 and post-secondary.
- Opportunities for 3<sup>rd</sup> party research collaborations have arisen and are being explored.
- ACAT's role within Campus Alberta is evolving and potential opportunities continue to be explored, notably related to learner pathways.
- Articulation committees have been growing at a rate of 2 or 3 per year based on available resources. To-date, there are 13 program areas represented. They provide a means of building relationships, trust, and facilitating an opportunity for sharing common issues and experiences by building lines of communication and transfer agreements between institutions.
- Collaboration between articulation committees, including discussions around learning outcomes and leveraging by-program transfer agreements, is being explored. We are also looking at information sharing regarding admissions practices. Every institution has different admission requirements, with student awareness and access to information a priority.
- Attendees agreed there is a role for admission commonalities/information sharing, outcomes-based learning, and transferability provincially and Canada-wide. Tracking data regarding current admissions and transfer practices is needed to effectively move forward.

- In June 2013, ACAT launched a monthly Spotlight communication, which is distributed to stakeholders from across Campus Alberta. We are open to including information from pan-Canadian partners, as well. The Spotlight is available at [www.acat.ab.ca](http://www.acat.ab.ca) and WestCAT and PCCAT partners will be added to the distribution list.
- In October 2013, ACAT Council approved posting on Transfer Alberta transfer agreements that Alberta Transfer System member institutions have with non-member institutions (where the non-member is the sending institution). This agreement should be implemented in November, allowing learners to access additional information, such as cross border agreements, opening up other considerations when determining their pathways. Next steps include creating awareness that this opportunity for institutions to share additional data is now available and how to access this opportunity. BC is similar and discussing protocols regarding public institutions putting information into the BC transfer system.
- New Alberta *Student Mobility Reports* are estimated to be available by December 2013, replacing the previous *Transfer Patterns* reports. These reports provide institution-approved program-level data for student enrolment and mobility by public institution or Campus Alberta sector and using the Alberta student number (ASN). Data regarding course-level student mobility or transfer credit awarded is not provincially available. We are working on developing additional new reports that could also include high school transitions data, University Transfer program completions, and dual credit. As a number of provinces are looking at reporting processes and cross border transfer, further discussion would be helpful.
- High school credentialing is being reviewed in Alberta by K-12 partners. Examples from the discussion include competency-based curriculum, graduation requirements, and type(s) of diplomas/credentials available.
- Alberta will be attending the CAPLA conference this year, supporting its interest in student success and PLAR.

## 5. “Pathways and Partnerships” - Bow Valley College (BVC)

Presenters:

Dr. David Allwright - Dean of Business School – Alberta South Initiative

Anna Kae Todd - Vice President, Learning

- Campus Alberta South (CAS) Partnership
  - When building the new south campus, BVC had an opportunity to reach out to other public post-secondary institutions in Southern Alberta, who already had a presence in Calgary, and form a new partnership to work together for mutual benefit and compliment rather than compete. This provides more seamless transfer for the learner as per the Campus Alberta goal.
  - Membership includes Bow Valley College, Athabasca University, Olds College (satellite formerly at the Calgary Stampede grounds), and University of Lethbridge (satellite formerly at SAIT). This partnership invited these institutions to move to the BVC South Campus in a landlord/tenant, no rent partnership. Each partner operates within a service agreement and their students have access to all BVC facilities. Enhanced use of the library and learning commons drive are additional costs which are shared.
  - In terms of managing partnerships, a committee consisting of Vice-President Academics of the four institutions and any other needed/appropriate addition for specific issues manage the partnership. At the beginning, the Chief Financial Officers

- and Student Services Vice Presidents were deeply involved in negotiating lease agreements and services. They developed common principles and clarity on key issues to move forward and will work out others as they arise.
- Collaboration was the key to success. The first job was to work on principles and management structure, and then focus on key areas with an interest in activity and opportunities for sharing Aboriginal programming, transfer and articulation agreements (21 in place to date), dual credit, and communication.
  - In addition to this collaboration, some institutions were given money from Alberta Health to address the growing issue of mental health in student populations. The University of Lethbridge received funding, which is being shared with student services and counselling staff, and we are working on how to translate this resource to make it open to all students and track its use.
  - David explained some of the initiatives and challenges of the Campus Alberta South collaboration:
    - Population and academic diversity
    - Entrance requirements
    - Designing programs to meet the needs of students who do not fit in traditional models
    - Unique opportunity to look at how block transfer shifts from diploma to degree
    - Non-traditional delivery of programs (e.g., online)
    - Make transfer more seamless and transparent for the learner
    - Get students more engaged and create an understanding of how they are actively engaged in decisions regarding their pathways and experience – not prescriptive
    - Partnership example sharing a credential: Olds College fashion merchandising and marketing diploma – one year at Olds for foundation business/marketing courses and then two years at BVC business administration diploma with specialization.
  - Dual Credit:
    - Recently the Ministries of Education, Enterprise and Advance Education, and Human Services contributed over \$11 million over three years for dual credit initiatives through the Provincial Dual Credit Strategy.
    - Bow Valley worked on previous pilots around dual credit; dual credit is still evolving.
    - Some dual credit opportunities for students build on Alberta Education's 1 credit high school CTS courses.
    - \$5.3 million of this funding is to foster secondary/post-secondary/business and industry partnerships to offer sustainable dual credit opportunities for students in Alberta. An application process led by a Steering Committee is providing up to \$150,000 for a partnership to develop a dual credit course/program for students.
    - BVC was involved in some of the successful partnerships. Collaboration is desirable.
    - More information about Strategy-funded opportunities and partnerships is available at [www.albertadualcredit.ca](http://www.albertadualcredit.ca).
  - Regional Stewardship:
    - There are 6 sectors (types) of institutions in Alberta. Comprehensive Community Institutions (CCIs) have been given the mandate to serve their geographic region, which refers to the regional stewardship mandate to service communities,

- providers, adult literacy groups, and school boards, as well as to identify facilitation access - subject to resources – to meet the needs of their region.
- This is a noble goal and well received, but resourcing creates limitations.
  - BVC has had a lot of positive response and built on relationships, partnering, and programming.
  - High school districts are very interested in dual credit and see it as a huge opportunity.
  - BVC met with school districts and together identified Business and Tourism and Health Care areas as appropriate starting points, with school authorities leading funding requests in the Strategy application process.
  - The broader goal is for the post-secondary institution to show leadership and make students understand the possibilities available to them in post-secondary institutions.
  - A January start is proving to be effective going forward. There are a number of models for dual credit that are emerging.

Comments:

- Joint offerings and site sharing address the issue of reducing program duplication in post-secondary institutions through delivery partnerships.
- Because learners are still in high school and not registered as a full time post-secondary student, they still qualify for provincial high school scholarships.
- Credits earned can be taken to the post-secondary institution.
- Tuition cannot be charged to the high school learner, so the school and PSI have an agreement to cover this cost to the mutual benefit of both organizations. Students then go to where the instruction is agreed to occur—at the institution or the high school.
- Funding implications for long-term, sustainable dual credit opportunities is a key item for discussion.
- Dual credit models exist in Ontario and the USA, as well, and may offer some insight going forward.
- Instructor qualifications discussions continue.
- Interest in post-secondary institutions being allowed to offer joint program credentials an ongoing discussion.

**6. Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT) 2013 Conference:**

6.1. Update:

- PCCAT was incorporated in May 2013.
- The board structure was explained.
- The 2013 conference was held in Edmonton, with the highest number of delegates participating to date (85 delegates). Thanks are given to the generosity of MacEwan University (host site), who also helped this year's PCCAT event to be the most financially successful to date.
- The 2014 conference is scheduled for June in conjunction with ARUCC in Quebec City. The call for proposals will be sent at the end of November. Keep watching the website for updates.

6.2. National Transcript and Transfer Credit Standards project:

- Purpose: To guide the update of the National Transcript Guide and create common transfer credit nomenclature standards across Canada

- Fundraising is in progress and a number of partners have contributed. We are close to being able to do Phase 1 survey regarding current transcript practices across Canada and look at how this information can guide revisions to the National Transcript Guide.
- Phase 2 will be to create common transfer credit nomenclature and information regarding transfer practices that is accessible via an online searchable base, with the potential to share data across jurisdictions.
- It was agreed that the four CATs panel session at PCCAT was a great success and should continue at future conferences/key meetings.
- PCCAT proposed the idea of a four CATs meeting to talk about the role they can play together in broadening the base of WestCAT. We all share a common objective and want to discuss how to make it happen across the country, creating more opportunities for learner pathways and support for student mobility. It was agreed that the four CATs would set up an inaugural meeting and determine next steps.

## **7. Review of WestCAT Work Plan and Next Steps**

### **7.1. Discussion of Potential Protocol Development among Other Jurisdictions**

- WestCAT has a unique opportunity to better support students by enhancing the connectivity between provinces. Saskatchewan and Alberta are already in discussions about Saskatchewan potentially becoming a type of “member” of the Alberta Transfer System and/or sharing transfer agreement information via Transfer Alberta. This is in an effort to eliminate barriers regarding interprovincial transfer agreements and student mobility. This could also build on the 2009 Letter of Agreement between ministries in Alberta and Saskatchewan, including establishing a cooperative framework(s) to support areas of mutually beneficial post-secondary education and research and innovation (including transfer).

### **7.2. Transfer System Membership**

- BC has a clear definition and process regarding membership in the BC transfer system. AB has criteria/an application process for membership in the Alberta transfer system, including public, Indigenous, out-of-province, and private not-for-profit members.

### **7.3. Relationship among Articulation Committees across Provinces**

- WestCAT members are open to discussion regarding development, growth, and interprovincial collaboration for articulation committees.
- Both BC and AB have annual articulation committee meetings and articulation committee chair meetings; there is an opportunity in the future to have a joint chair or committee meeting(s) to share experiences and ideas.
- BC, AB and SK will continue discussions regarding articulation committees and collaboration and keep the rest of the group informed.
- BC invites all WestCAT members to attend their annual chair meeting (JAM), which is usually held in November.

### **7.4. Relationship among Research Plans / Shared Opportunities across Provinces**

- BC is a leader in research and a number of collaborations have been discussed:
  - Interprovincial flows: Interested in broader system and regional AB/BC flows. IN the future, this would likely require asking institutions to make changes to their business processes to accomplish data collection to be communicated so they are motivated to make changes. This is a major shift in practice and need to explore the driver and possibilities first. GOAL: Have a discussion, by conference call, to

discuss this item further and possible next steps. Potential Participants: Eric Dohei (ACAT), Robert Adamoski (BCCAT), and Patricia McDougall (UofS), other WestCAT representatives and provincial meetings.

- Dual Credit exploration is a common initiative, though at different stages for each province.
  - MB has a presence in their system with colleges and universities, but is not active.
  - SIAST would like additional information as to what is happening in other provinces.
  - BC is talking about capturing existing practices (e.g., rubric regarding similarities, strengths and limitations). They are also exploring opportunities and interprovincial flow.
  - AB currently is engaging in a tri-ministry *Provincial Dual Credit Strategy*, providing over \$11 million in funding related to dual credit, with over \$5.3 of these funds for development of secondary/post-secondary/business and industry partnerships and sustainable dual credit opportunities for students. More information is available on the [albertadualcredit.ca](http://albertadualcredit.ca) website.
  - Discussion of developing a rubric/collection mechanism or some other form of information/initiative sharing between BC/AB regarding dual credit. AGREED. Everyone will be kept informed as it progresses.
- The sharing of Alberta Transfer System member institution transfer agreements in the BC guide was discussed. Alberta will also be implementing a non-member policy later in November and will share it with WestCAT and with ACAT Contact People at their upcoming annual meeting. Eric and Ann Marie will discuss this idea further with Rob Fleming.
- The development of a technology structure/mechanism for information sharing regarding transfer agreements and transfer credit potentially in the future was discussed. It was agreed that as each province has discussions, to share outcomes with each other. As this collaboration evolves, increased WestCAT communication may be required.
- Learning Outcomes – BC has been researching policies in Europe and America regarding learning outcomes in transfer. Information is hoped to be shared before Christmas. ACAT is in dialogue with Dietmar Kennepohl, who is working on a research paper that is of interest to WestCAT. ACAT will connect Dietmar and John FitzGibbon (BCCAT) for discussion.

#### 7.5. Review of Current Status of WestCAT Committee, Benefits/Issues, Work Plan

- WestCAT sees value in continuing to meet on annual basis, and on increasing WestCAT collaboration on an ongoing basis during the year.
- Discussion occurred regarding about key collaboration initiatives, information sharing items, and resources.
- Based on today's discussion, Eric and Rob will advise on next steps for updating the Workplan (New future structure? WestCAT SharePoint site? Items to now include given pan-Canadian activities?) and share ideas with the committee for their input at next year's meeting.

### 8. Other Business

- PCCAT session about WestCAT – not discussed at this time; propose this item be discussed at next year's meeting in preparation for PCCAT 2015.

**9. Next Annual Meeting – Date/Location**

- Saskatchewan volunteered to host the 2014 meeting.
- Manitoba volunteered to host the 2015 meeting.

**10. Adjournment 2:40 p.m.**