

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer  
Biological Sciences Articulation committee  
Minutes of meeting Thursday May 9, 2019

**Minutes submitted by Carol Kroeker, Chair**

**In attendance (in person or via teleconference):**

Carol Kroeker, Chair, UCalgary; Sean Irwin, GPRC; Blaire Legaree, Keyano; Heather Addy, UCalgary; Margot Williams, MRU; Joanne Reynolds, MHC; Jocelyn Hall, UAlberta; Randall Barley, ULethbridge; Brett Selinger, ULethbridge; Jody Rintoul, UAAugustana; Robert Cuny, Lakeland; Kevin Friesen, GMU; Sandra MacDougall, RDC; Heather Prior, KingsU; Shun Li, Portage; Sean Irwin (GPRC), Clare Ard, ACAT Secretariat

1. **Welcome Announcements**
2. **Minutes of 2018 Meeting:**
  - Reviewed and approved.
3. **Institutional Updates (Reports received are attached)**

**King's University (Heather Prior)**

- Have good student numbers
- Undergoing a Biology program review
- New hire in cellular and molecular biology

**Keyano College (Blaine Legaree)**

- No program changes, no new initiatives or concerns
- The new Environmental Science program had their first graduates this year

**University of Lethbridge (Randall Barley)**

- Have introduced two new second-year into their biology core
  - Biostatistics
  - Cell Biology
- They also have several new senior courses including
  - Cannabis & Health /
  - Natural Products
  - Limnology
  - Biomedical Genomics

- Molecular Biology of Aging
- Field Botany
- Research Internship program has been very successful and is well subscribed
- 2 Concentrations were introduced
  - Biomedical
  - Conservation & Biodiversity
- They had some retirements and not enough new hires to replace them

#### **MacEwan University (Kevin Friesen)**

- On-going program review
- The department has been working hard on course mapping to align the new Biology program learning outcomes with those in the course outlines
- Adding a lab component to the upper level Genetics course (GENE 370)

#### **University of Calgary (Heather Addy)**

- Two new hires - in biochemistry and evolutionary/comparative biomechanics
- Working on getting more flexibility in transferring equivalents to BCEM 393 (which is at capacity)
- Continue to battle a shrinking faculty and a shrinking budget
- Looking to change course prefixes to Biology (instead of zoology, botany, etc.)

#### **Lakeland College (Robert Cuny)**

- Had a 10% decrease in numbers this year
- Admission grade is staying at 50%
  - Study showed that entrance % was no indicator of student success
- Comprehensive program review is this year
- Trends – most of the students are looking to finish with a degree in nursing or education
- Of the transferring students, most go to either U of Alberta or U of Saskatchewan

#### **Red Deer College (Sandra MacDougall)**

- Still working towards University status (hope this will be soon)
  - long term goal is a full biology degree
- As a result of the Canada Winter games, they have new kinesiology facilities
- Student numbers have increased
- Having a program review
  - Looking to change the zoology, botany, ecology courses to a Biology prefix
  - Remove mature students admission requirements
- Retirement of faculty – hoping for new hires

#### **Mount Royal University (Margot Williams, report submitted by Melanie Rathburn)**

- Consolidating the BSc in Cellular and Molecular Biology and the BSc in Health Science to one BSc Biology degree (2020)
  - Students will be able to take concentrations within the degree in Anatomy & Physiology, Cellular and Molecular biology, or Ecology and Evolution.
  - Students can also complete a degree without a concentration (BSc Biology)

- Partnering with University of Lethbridge in a pilot project: FIT – Future Innovators in Technology which will involve summer studentships and pathways (and funding) to graduate school
- Hiring a new Tier II Canada Research Chair

#### **Medicine Hat College (Jo-Anne Reynolds)**

- Adding courses in Evolutionary Biology, Molecular genetics, and Metabolism
- Most students are transferring to U of Alberta, U of Calgary, and U of Saskatchewan
- Hoping to get a 2+2 transfer with both MRU and U of Lethbridge (2 year transfer blocks)
- Faculty retirement – hoping to replace with an instructor

#### **Augustana University (Jody Rintoul)**

- High demand for Biology program
  - Very few transfer students
- New format of course delivery (1 course in 3 weeks and 4 courses over 11 weeks) seemed to be working – and better for student burn-out
- New transfers with Burman University
- BA Biology now requires Math 30-1.
- Institutional Review is underway
  - Looking for a new Dean

#### **University of Albert (Jocelyn Hall)**

- In second year of only admitting students to the three consolidated degrees
  - Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology
  - Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology
  - Integrative Physiology
- Are no longer accepting students to the previous programs
  - Animal Biology, Evolutionary Biology, Microbiology, and Plant Biology
- Generating learning outcomes for the three new consolidated degrees
- High demand and highly competitive average
  - no changes to admission requirements however
- Five new hires in the department

#### **Portage College (Shun Li)**

- Admission requirement of the University Transfer Program was updated to
  - Minimum of 60% with no mark lower than 50%
  - 4 30-level courses from: Humanities, Fine Arts, Sciences, and electives
- Have adopted a common grading scale in the UT program

#### **Grande Prairie Regional College (Sean Irwin)**

- Looking to gain University status
- New courses in Evolution and Plant Biology
- U of A Medical Laboratory Science program now requires Biol 207 – only offered in the fall at GPRC

- U of A Pharmacy program requires 6 credits of Physiology which is not currently fulfilled by courses at GPRC
- Two annual positions were made tenure-track ahead of becoming a university

**Following Reports presented from Institutions in Absentia (Carol Kroeker):**

**Lethbridge College**

- No program changes, updates, issues, or new transfer agreements
- Kevin Smith will be the new Dean

**St. Mary's University**

- Added a new tutorial component to the evolution course (Biol 415)
- Changed requirements from a minimum of 65% in Bio 30, Chem 30, and Math 30-1 TO a minimum of 50% in these courses
  - Will use competitive admissions

**4. BCCAT Report (Presented after our meeting)**

- The BCCAT team were meeting on the same day as our ACAT meeting so we were not able to get their full report until after our meeting concluded.
- Their report for 2019 is attached (summary below).
  - BC is anxious to promote transfer agreements between the provinces.
  - There is high demand for their courses by international students
  - Their Flexible Pre-majors (FPM) program (which allows easy transfer of the first two years of schooling among the BC institutions is under-utilized and may be eliminated. Their FPM program was similar to our transfer block and had the same drawbacks for students that the block program had and will likely suffer a similar fate
  - BCCAT initiatives (completed or underway) include
    - Understanding Advanced Placement Grading
    - Growth of Post-Degree Programs in BC
    - Admission of high school non-graduates
    - Indigenous pathways for learning in post-secondary (second phase on student perspectives, project led by UBC-O)
    - International transfer credit practices
    - Surveys of mobile students – why and where did they move to

**5. ACAT Council Update**

- New major updates until the new provincial government establishes its priorities
- There may be some funds available for possible research projects
- There was some discussion about implications of the new government

**6. Chair Position**

- Carol Kroeker's 2-year appointment was up this year, but by acclamation, she was appointed for another 2 year term.

**7. Discussion on Faculty staffing**

- Most programs seemed to agree that hiring is not keeping up with retirements.
- As programs grow, the number of faculty is not keeping pace
- Budgets are also shrinking with growing programs.

**8. No other new business was raised – Meeting was adjourned**

**Next meeting**

Date TBA – University of Lethbridge