

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer
Biological Sciences Articulation committee
Minutes of meeting Monday June 22, 2020

Minutes submitted by Carol Kroeker, Chair

In attendance (via ZOOM):

Carol Kroeker, Chair, UCalgary; Gary Grothman, St. Mary's; Blaire Legaree, Keyano; Dorothy Hill, MRU; Heather Addy, UCalgary; Joanne Reynolds, MHC; Jocelyn Hall, UAlberta; Randall Barley, ULeithbridge; Brett Selinger, ULeithbridge; Jody Rintoul, UAAugustana; Robert Cuny, Lakeland; Kevin Friesen, GMU; Sandra MacDougall, RDC; Sean Irwin (GPRC), Clare Ard, ACAT Secretariat

1. **Welcome Announcements / Introductions**
2. **Minutes of 2019 Meeting:**
 - Reviewed and approved.
3. **Institutional Updates (Reports received are attached)**

Keyano College (Blaine Legaree)

- No program changes, no new initiatives or concerns
- Enrolment was up in first year classes but down in second year classes

University of Lethbridge (Randall Barley)

- No major changes to the program
 - No new transfers
- Funding and student numbers continue to be a challenge
 - Student numbers are increasing which put a stress on lab courses
- The switch to on-line learning was sudden but seemed to be okay

MacEwan University (Kevin Friesen)

- Program Learning outcomes have been a focus for the department, as well as course mapping with the PLO's
- Plan to re-code all courses (except BICM – Biochemistry) as BIOL courses
- New courses in Conservation Biology (BIOL 467) and Freshwater Ecology (BIOL 477)
- ZOOL 452 – Parasitism has been deleted
- Course revisions: BOTN 305 is now BOTN 405; ZOOL 425 is re-developed as ZOOL 325; GENE 370 seminars are being redeveloped to labs; BIOL 367, BIOL 323 and BOTN 405 to be offered every year

University of Calgary (Heather Addy)

- No new or deleted programs or courses
- No new transfer agreements
- Continuing discussion of changes to the program structure or re-numbering of courses
- Due to capacity issues with BCEM 393, U of C is currently allowing more flexibility in transferring in BCEM from other institutions.

Lakeland College (Robert Cuny)

- The 2019 comprehensive review of courses showing that our course offerings are in step with the changes at receiving institutions
- Academic upgrading is available to students through Saskatchewan's Foundational Learning program
- U of Alberta has approved a second cohort of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program at Lakeland (meaning students don't have to move)
- Most of our students are going into education and nursing with fewer students going into science and pharmacy. U of A and U of Saskatchewan are the primary schools that students transfer to. Some students stay at Lakeland to complete their degree through a collaboration with Athabasca U.

Red Deer College (Sandra MacDougall)

- Red Deer College is moving closer to having University status
- Hope to offer a full Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology within 2 years.
 - To this end, they are hoping to hire to faculty in the department and to expand course offerings significantly
 - COVID created challenges with on-line learning, particularly for the lab courses

Mount Royal University (Dorothy Hill)

- This coming year (2020/2021) will be the first year of our consolidated Biology program.
- Students are now required to take a course with Indigenous content. Biology has developed a course called "Common Ground: Learning from the Land" numbered BIOL 3201.
- No changes to admissions, transfers, or other courses.

Medicine Hat College (Jo-Anne Reynolds)

- Enrolment in UT Science (Kinesiology and Arts) has been declining over the past few years
- New dual agreement with University of Lethbridge for students to transfer into U of L's Bachelor of Science (Environmental Science) program
- New courses in Evolutionary Biology (BIOL 221 and 321)
- Re-activated Biology 305 (Human Organism)

Augustana University (Jody Rintoul)

- No new transfers

- Biology program will now be called Integrative Biology
- Program changes were approved that will affect all BSc majors starting in Fall 2021
 - First year will be more inter-disciplinary with “Science Foundations” courses
 - Lab courses will now be awarded 3 credits in the first year courses for Biology, Chemistry, and Physics
 - Students will complete 6 first year lab credits (2 courses) in 2 of the above disciplines. This will reduce the lab load on the students in first year.
 - They will complete the other 3 credit lab required in their second year

University of Alberta (Jocelyn Hall)

- Now in the third year of limiting admitting students to just the three consolidated programs
 - Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology
 - Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology
 - Integrative Physiology
- They are no longer admitting students (including transfers) to the 4 suspended programs
 - Animal Biology, Evolutionary Biology, Microbiology, or Plant Biology
- Internal program reviewed have been postponed to fall 2020 due to COVID.
- Admission to the department is based on a competitive average and remains highly competitive.
- Faculty of Science is increasing their enrolment across the faculty, including Biology
- No new transfer agreements

St. Mary’s University (Gary Grothman)

- With the switch to on-line learning, students were given the option to take a pass/fail system or to take a letter grade. With the pass/fail system – anything about a C- was considered a pass, and an F included the D and D+ letter grades
- No new transfer agreements
- Spring, summer and Fall terms are expected to be on-line, with some hybrid delivery of labs. Students may also get take-home kits for labs

King’s University (Heather Prior)

- All King’s students are now required to take two Science courses
- New Biology course for non-majors is BIOL 290 – Concepts and Connections
- More students are wanting to take Biology without having high school Chemistry or Math
- No new transfer agreements

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

Lethbridge College (Mark Klassen)

- No major changes in the transfer program

Grande Prairie Regional College (Sean Irwin)

- GPRC continues to offer transfer courses and advise most of their students into the three U of A programs.
- Pharmacy now requires 6 credits of physiology that isn't currently fulfilled by GPRC's nursing or physical education physiology courses
- Medical Lab Science requires Biol 207 – which is only offered in the fall – presenting challenges to some students
- No new transfers

Portage College (Shun Li)

- All courses will be delivered on line in Fall 2020
- Biology 101 was cancelled for fall 2020 because of difficulties teaching lab components remotely
 - Moved to Winter 2021

6. Discussion on Switching to on-line learning

- Integrity issues with on-line testing
- Some institutions didn't have enough IT in place to help faculty and students
- With on-line exams – many courses were seeing elevated grades
 - Discussion on how this may affect applications to graduate programs
- Stress levels higher in faculty and students
- Discussion of how labs were handled in the on-line format
- Discussion of what 2020/2021 may look like in terms of hybrid or on-line learning

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

Next meeting

Date TBA – matched to UBEA meeting