

Jurisdictional Report for Manitoba – PCCAT 2009

The government agency with primary responsibility for credit transfer is the Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE). The Council acts as an intermediary between the post-secondary institutions and the government, and is composed of eleven members including a chairperson. Reporting to the Council is a staff Secretariat of nine civil servants, which undertakes activities and projects designed to fulfill the mandate of the Council and to meet the goals established by the Council and Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy. The Secretariat also works in consultation with the universities and colleges to support the Council members in the development of policy and financial accountability.

The Province's public post-secondary system includes the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg, Brandon University, Red River College, Assiniboine Community College, University College of the North, and Le Collège Universitaire de Saint-Boniface, which includes École technique et professionnelle.

Under its founding legislation, the COPSE mandate includes allocating funding to institutions “with a view to avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort and expense within the post-secondary education system”, and “facilitating the implementation of appropriate credit transfer arrangements between universities and colleges.”

Institutions are fairly active in the area of credit transfer, and among the seven public institutions there are currently over 150 transfer and articulation agreements in place. However, while individual institutions provide information on agreements to which they are party, as of now there is not a central source to provide information in a consistent and coordinated manner across institutions. Institutions have identified this as an area requiring additional resources and attention, and COPSE has recently acquired additional capacity to assist in establishing a more adequate and coordinated system, including facilitating further agreements and

improving information about existing agreements. Credit transfer and articulation are also key elements of a formal Quality Assurance framework currently under development by COPSE, and it is expected that credit transfer and articulation will both contribute to and be facilitated by the Quality Assurance framework.

As part of its ongoing work in this area, COPSE has adopted the credit transfer principles established by the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) and those principles have been communicated to the seven public postsecondary institutions. Institutions have indicated their agreement with the principles, which have also been informally adopted by Articulation Committees that have been established to facilitate credit transfers and articulation agreements between the college and university sectors in certain areas of study.

Some of the measures identified to improve the credit transfer system are: improved transfer between colleges and universities; a more transparent and accessible source of information about credit transfer across institutions; better coordination and communication among the institutions; and a more active role for COPSE in facilitating and providing system-wide information about credit transfer.

One important recent development with implications for credit transfer in Manitoba is the passing of legislation to grant public colleges the ability to offer four-year baccalaureate degrees. The first proposed degree (in construction management) will be offered at Red River College beginning in 2010. Manitoba has now joined Alberta, Ontario, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island in authorizing colleges to grant degree credentials. This change has implications with respect to those holding previous credentials, such as related diplomas and degrees, and wishing to undertake a college baccalaureate, and for those eventually graduating

with a college baccalaureate and wishing to use it as the basis to pursue further post-secondary studies.