

Ontario Update at the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admission and Transfer

Fredericton, NB, June 22, 2009

Facts and Figures – Ontario’s Postsecondary Education System

Structure of PSE in Ontario

- Ontario’s postsecondary education consists of:
 - o 20 universities, each with a separate charter and a high level of autonomy over its academic programs and admission
 - o 1 degree-granting college of art and design
 - o 24 colleges of applied arts and technology with limited degree-granting. These institutions must seek consent from the Minister to grant degrees.
 - o Approximately 500 private career colleges
- The college system, created in the mid-1960s, was intended for students who would not be attending university, but who were seeking to gain knowledge and skills of an applied nature.
- Ontario’s postsecondary education system was not originally structured to create systematic pathways from one institution to another, nor to have institutions offer joint programs.
- However, the changing nature of college programs has led to a large number of articulation agreements between colleges and universities, as well as joint programs.

Enrolment

- In 2009-2008, there were 560,000 full-time students enrolled in Ontario colleges and universities, who were eligible for government funding, an increase of 100,000 or 22% since 2002-2003.
- As part of Ontario’s Reaching Higher Plan, the government will have invested \$6.2 billion in postsecondary education by 2009-10. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is seeking to increase access, quality, accountability and capacity in the province’s institutions.
- Demand for postsecondary education is expected to continue to grow in both the medium and long term. It is suggested that this growth in enrolment could be between 65,000 and 110,000 by 2015.

Past Credit Transfer Initiatives

In 1996, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities established the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) to facilitate, promote and co-

ordinate joint college-university initiatives. CUCC currently operates under an agreement with the ministry and receives \$275,000 per year.

- CUCC has created and continues to maintain an online Ontario College-University Transfer Guide that provides a list of collaborative programs, articulation agreements and credit transfer arrangements between universities and colleges in Ontario.
- The guide lists a total of 313 formal agreements between colleges and universities. The majority of these are bilateral and degree completion.
- In 2006-2007, the Ministry has provided \$3M to CUCC as part of a system-wide “Change Fund”. These funds were earmarked for innovative activities to expand and enhance opportunities for learners to have their credentials recognized by other institutions. Examples of the twelve Change Fund projects conducted until now include:
 - Transfer practices focusing on degree completion agreements using block transfer from college programs to high affinity¹ baccalaureate degree programs.
 - Degree completion agreements using provincially-developed college program standards.
 - Transfer practices centred on course-by-course transfer in General Arts and Sciences and Liberal Arts programs.
- In spring 2009, CUCC launched a call for participants to build on models of best practice as developed by past Change Fund projects. Examples of these include:
 - Increasing the number of high affinity programs for block transfer agreements
 - Collaborative degree-diploma agreements, where there is no existing entry point for students.
 - Providing an effective and efficient method of identifying courses in arts and sciences that could be offered by colleges as part of specific diploma programs or as general education electives, and that would transfer to university degree programs in the arts and sciences.
 - Expanding the number of university partners in agreements.

Current Credit Transfer Initiatives

- The Ministry has received government direction to proceed with the design and implementation of a “made-in-Ontario” credit transfer system by 2012.

¹ Within the context of college to university transfer, high affinity programs are typically programs where the subject matter and content of a college diploma program are closely related to the content of a university degree program.

- The Ministry has established a Steering Committee with representation from the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), Colleges Ontario (CO), CUCC and Ontario's three postsecondary student associations.
- Phased implementation of the credit transfer system is anticipated to begin in 2009.