

Why Develop a Research Agenda? Lessons Learned from BC's Experience

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The Context

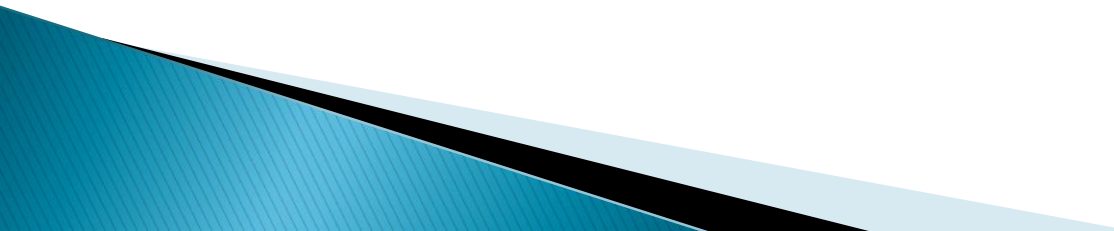
- ▶ What are the **impediments** to developing a successful transfer system **that is supported** by all members of that system?
- ▶ How can you develop **a culture** in which a transfer system **is valued** by all members of that system?

Focus of Presentation:

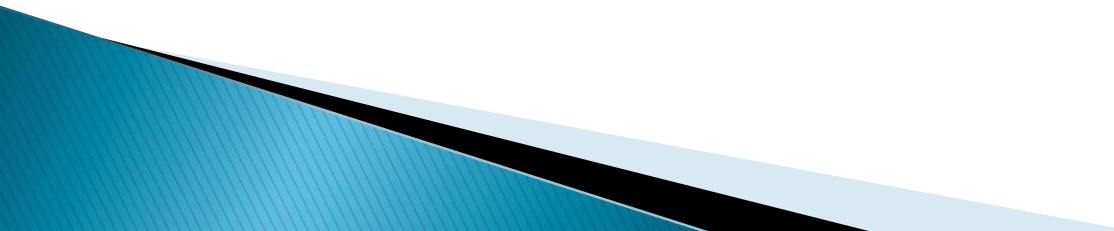
The role of research in building support for a transfer system and measuring its success



Outline

- ▶ **BC historical context for research**
 - ▶ **Categories of research showing transfer system effectiveness**
 - **Kinds of research**
 - **Key messages**
 - **Examples**
 - ▶ **Research Processes**
 - ▶ **Conclusion**
 - ▶ **Contact**
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BC Historical Context for Research

- ▶ Level of skepticism in 1960s about new colleges
 - ▶ Early problems with courses not transferring
 - ▶ Decision in 1968 by institutions to form articulation committees
 - ▶ Early research on student performance in 1970s
 - ▶ Systematic research agenda established by BCCAT in 1990s
 - ▶ Decades of evidence to inform decision makers
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Research

- ▶ **What are broad categories of research that build evidence of effectiveness of a transfer system?**

Kinds of Research

1. Research that shows extent of student mobility

- How many students attend more than one institution to complete a credential?
- What are patterns of movement across institutions?

Key messages

- Students are moving. Our job is to facilitate that movement.
- An efficient system provides transfer credit for mobile students.

Examples

- ▶ **Student Transitions Project: student movement among post-secondary institutions**

aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/documents/PSM-Newsletter-2011.pdf

- ▶ **Transfer student mobility studies**

bccat.ca/pubs/rr_mobility09.pdf

Kinds of Research (cont'd)

2. Research on academic performance of transfer students

- How does performance compare with others?
- What are graduation rates?
- How much transfer credit is awarded?
- What are levels of engagement?
- What is time to completion and credits to graduation?

Key messages

- Transfer students are successful.
- Transfer is viable route to degree completion.

Examples

- ▶ Transfer student profile reports

bccat.ca/pubs/rr_apr10.pdf

bccat.ca/pubs/SFUProfile0708.pdf

- ▶ Transcript assessment studies

bccat.ca/pubs/rr-oct00.pdf

- ▶ Student engagement studies

bccat.ca/pubs/rr_dec06.pdf

- ▶ Credits to graduation report

bccat.ca/pubs/rr_creditstograduation.pdf

Kinds of Research (cont'd)

3. Research on experiences of transfer students

- Why do students transfer?
- What are transfer expectations?
- What are transfer and admissions experiences?
- What are barriers to transfer?
 - Conduct surveys

Key messages

- Institutions should pay attention to transfer student expectations and experiences.
- Institutions can make changes to improve those experiences.

Examples

- ▶ **Survey results on transfer and admissions experiences**

bccat.ca/pubs/rr_mar09.pdf

- ▶ **Survey data on those dissatisfied with transfer experience (pending)**
- ▶ **Survey data on reasons students switch institutions (pending)**

Kinds of Research (cont'd)

4. Research on outcomes after graduation

- What are outcomes at various intervals after graduation?
 - Conduct surveys
 - Determine employment levels, salary, community engagement, debt loads, etc.

Key messages

- Transfer students make strong contributions to economy and society.
- May not have had opportunity without transfer route.

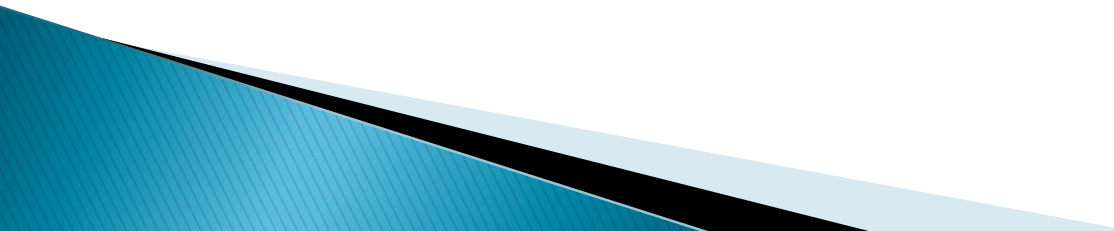
Examples

- ▶ **Outcomes of baccalaureate graduates five years after graduation**

bccat.ca/pubs/univoutcomes.pdf

bccat.ca/pubs/rr_sept07.pdf

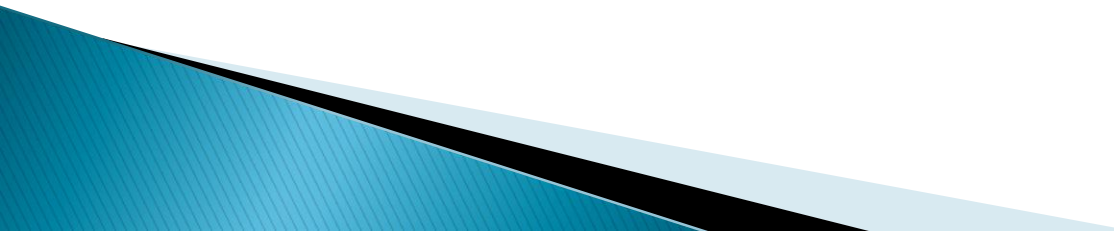
Research Processes

- ▶ **Government provides annual funding**
 - ▶ **Research is systematic, multi-faceted, longitudinal**
 - ▶ **Engage institutions to conduct research**
 - ▶ **Use regular data submissions vs one-of requests**
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Research Processes (cont'd)

- ▶ **Use advisory committees**
 - ▶ **Disseminate results widely**
 - ▶ **Do occasional meta-analyses (show big picture and trends)**
 - ▶ **Assess impact of research on policies and practices (government and institutions)**
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Conclusion

- ▶ Engage all stakeholders in transfer system in building systematic research agenda
 - ▶ Use results to convince government and institutions of:
 - Effectiveness of transfer system
 - Success of transfer students
 - ▶ Use research findings to impact policies and practices
 - ▶ Build a culture of evidence-based decision making
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Further questions or support?

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