

**SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY ARTICULATION COMMITTEE  
BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL on ADMISSIONS AND  
TRANSFERS (BCCAT)**

## 2019 Meeting Minutes

Institution/Location: Okanagan College, Kelowna BC Centre for Learning (room 310)  
Date: 03/04/2019.

**Present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Lori Barkley (Chairperson)	Selkirk College	lbarkley@selkirk.ca
Janet G. Mayr	Selkirk College	jmayr@selkirk.ca
Francis Adu-Febiri	Camosun College	adufibir@camosun.ca
Tara Tudor	Camosun College	
Annette Reynolds	Kwantlen Polytechnic University	annette.reynolds@kpu.ca
Jason Ramsey	Kwantlen Polytechnic University	jason.ramsey@kpu.ca
David Hopwood	Vancouver Island University	david.hopwood@viu.ca
William Gottschall	College of New Caledonia	gottschallw1@cnc.bc.ca
Darcie Olijnek	Vancouver Community College	dolijnek@vcc.ca
Adam Solomonian	Langara College	asolomonian@langara.ca
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Germain McKenzie	Corpus Christi College	gmckenzie@corpuschristi.ca
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Graham Cook	Capilano University	gcook@capilanou.ca
Suzanna Crage	Simon Fraser University	scrage@sfu.ca
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Christine Eley	University of the Fraser Valley	Christine.eley@ufv.ca
Erin-Lee McGuire	University of Victoria	ehalstad@uvic.ca

**Regrets: ?**

## **Welcome from Lori Barkley S/A Articulation Chair**

### **1. 8:30 a.m. coffee**

### **2. 9:00 a.m. Call to Order**

### **3. Introductions/welcome**

- Syilx/Okanagan welcome and prayer by Elder Wilfred 'Grouse' Barnes. Grouse taught the committee the word N'ha-a-itk, meaning 'spirit of the sacred waters', which reflects the connection of the people with the land and the waters of Okanagan Lake in Kelowna. This understanding differs significantly from the famous 'monster' in the lake, nicknamed Ogopogo.
- Institutional greeting by Rob Huxtable (Dean of AFP)
- Roundtable introductions by committee members

### **4. Approval of Agenda and Any Additional Items**

**Motion** to approve agenda – David Hopwood (VIU)

Seconded – Erin McGuire (UVic Anth)

Motion carried - unanimous

### **5. Approval of Previous Minutes of the Articulation Committee meeting of May 4th 2018**

**Motion** to approve the minutes – William Gottschall (CNC)

Seconded – Jason Ramsey (KPU Anth)

Motion Carried - unanimous

### **6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

No business arising.

### **7. Election/Re-Election of Chair and/or SLP (if required)** The 2-year term of committee chair is up this year

**Motion** to elect Jenn Wrye (NIC) as Chair – David Hopwood (VIU)

Seconded: Francis Adu-Feriri (Camosun)

Motion Carried: unanimous

### **8. New Business**

#### **a. Outstanding Articulation Requests** (list circulated via email May 1)

Committee members are encouraged to track down articulation committee representatives from institutions at which articulation requests are pending (institutional contacts are also given on the list).

- b. **BCCAT Curriculum Update** (FYI sent via email 04/30)
- c. **Methods course/s @ SFU: Suzanna Crage SA 257: Understanding Quantitative Research in Sociology and Anthropology.**

SFU Soc/Anth department implemented this new course to replace a previous course taught by the Statistics department. It is not a course on instruction in quantitative research methods per se, but is focused on conceptual frameworks in social sciences research, the social construction and social uses of statistics, descriptive and inferential data analysis using existing quantitative data sets. This course is required for the Sociology major. Anthropology students are not required to take quantitative methods as they need to be prepared for an upper level ethnography course. The department still offers a mixed methods introductory course that is required for both majors. (For more information see the institutional report for SFU Soc/Anth).

- d. **BCCAT Report: Fiona McQuarrie**

The BCCAT Spring Update, 2019 newsletter was circulated (see link to the report on the BCCAT website).

- BCCAT is celebrating 30 years and is held up internationally as an exemplary model for facilitating student transfer.
- The Education Planner, BC is useful for high school students and transfer students, mature students and career changers. This is now being run as an independent entity.
- UBC has opened its own internal transfer guide, linked with the transfer credit system so this is now publicly accessible.
- BCCAT has mapped out some general expectations and standards for respectful behavior at meetings that tend to match those at all academic institutions at which meetings are held.
- A future study of students with dual credits courses, offered in partnership post-secondary institutions with academic programs, is upcoming. Students with dual credit courses in trades has been researched but not those in academics.

- e. **BCCAT FPM (Flexible Pre-Major): Fiona McQuarrie**

Two BCCAT review/reports have been conducted to determine whether FPMs are functioning as a transfer agreement and investigate changes to the system that need to be made. The second report focused on ways to support existing FPMs and alternatives to the FPM.

- It appears that the FPM's are not working well and the benefits to students are unclear. However, since FPMs are not a credential, and therefore cannot be included on students' transcripts, it is difficult to determine how many students are using it as this cannot be tracked effectively.

- Visibility of FPMs is extremely low. There is a section on the BC Transfer Guide about the FPM, but this information is not included on individual institution's websites.
- There is a low level of awareness and understanding of the FPM among students, faculty, Chairs, Deans, Academic Advisors and administrative staff at Registrar and Admissions offices at many institutions. Knowledge of the FPMs within committees is also variable (some have no knowledge or understanding of FPMs). This is partly due to turnover of reps on BC Articulation Committees which is becoming more problematic as Articulation reps who initially developed the FPMs are retiring and knowledge is not passed on.
- There is a lack of course to course articulation among institutions with FPMs and this needs to be established if they are to be recognized by receiving institutions. If lower level courses need to be assessed for transfer individually, this defeats the purpose of the FPM.
- FPMs are not being updated on the BCCAT website as programs and curricula change. Some Articulation Committees are either not discussing the FPMs or are not passing on updates to BCCAT. The tables on the BCCAT website need to be updated regularly.
- BCCAT proposed three options that could be taken by Articulation Committees:
  - 1) Terminate its FPM agreement
  - 2) Continue its FPM agreement and take action on addressing the problems, or
  - 3) Discontinue the FPM and support other transfer arrangements or methods that serve the same function. For example, AA degrees could fulfill the same functions as FPMs. Articulation Committees could provide advice and recommendations to institutions wishing to develop AA degree specializations.

For more information, see recommendations from the BCCAT report: "Moving Forward with the Flexible Pre-Majors in the BC Transfer System".

**Discussion:**

- The lack of knowledge about the FPM needs to be addressed by Articulation reps.
- Students are also often unaware of what sociology and anthropology involve when they enter university and don't declare their major until later in their academic career.
- For smaller 'sending' institutions, the FPM can serve as leverage to acquire institutional funding to develop new courses. However, it was noted that this does not address the question as to whether the FPM is working as a transfer arrangement.
- The FPM tends to work well for Anthropology with its typical four discipline streams. The advantage is that it provides a set of courses that qualify for first and second years which makes it easier to assess whether courses on a student's transcript meet degree

requirements, rather than looking at transferability of individual courses separately, and direct transfer of individual courses may not allow students to apply certain courses to the receiving institution's degree requirements. However, this may not work at some institutions – e.g. SFU's SA department does not include archeology. Interdisciplinary courses are also difficult to articulate to first and second year sociology courses.

- The FPM accommodates variation in introductory course requirements among institutions. Some require a two part introductory sociology course (6 credits), some require only the first part or allow substitution of a 2000 level course (e.g. Canadian studies in sociology) for the second part, while others require only a one semester 3 credit course. For articulation purposes, the second part of a 6 credit introductory course transfers as unassigned credits.
- Research methods and statistics courses listed for FPMs are already vetted as meeting the requirements for BA degrees. However, there are institutions that do not accept methods courses taught by other departments (e.g. psychology or math departments) due to differences in content and focus – e.g. psychology courses with a focus on experiments are not an acceptable substitute for sociological research courses which cover a wider range of methods, and statistics courses taught in math departments differ in significant ways from social statistics.
- It may not be important for all institutions to be signed on to the FPM (individual institutions can opt out if their BA requirements don't fit courses listed for FPMs at sending institutions).
- Facilitating ease of transfer helps improve enrolment so it's in the interests of institutions and departments to support this.
- The Associate of Arts (AA) degree would serve a similar purpose as the FPM and has greater benefits. The AA is provincially mandated and is therefore consistent across BC institutions. It also allows students to graduate with a credential which may meet the needs of students who are not interested in or able to complete a full BA degree (e.g. international students). This doesn't preclude institutions from accepting students with diplomas for block transfer. For institutions that do not currently have an AA degree, developing one would involve considerable work and may not be feasible.
- The idea that BCCAT could set up a website indicating courses required for degree programs at various institutions and how they articulate with equivalent courses at other institutions was presented as an alternative to the FPM. However, Fiona observed that it would not be feasible for BCCAT to maintain a website of this sort, and noted that this type of information is available on the BC Transfer Guide, Academic Planner. Individual institutions could post this information on their websites.

- The FPM tends to be more beneficial to students transferring from smaller institutions to the larger universities so it would be good to know where they are going. Students Transitions Project on BCCAT website provides information on students transferring from/to the various institutions around the province for those who would like to track this.

It was determined that a motion and formal vote on the options presented by BCCAT could not be taken at this time and would be deferred until next year's meeting. Further discussion is required and option three (e.g. the AA degree as a substitute for the FPM) needs to be explored further. However, an informal vote indicated that the majority of committee members were supportive of keeping the FPMs in anthropology and in sociology.

If we want to keep the FPM, we need better record keeping to maintain continuity and Articulation committee reps will need to take steps to ensure there is greater awareness and knowledge of the FPM at their institutions. There should also be a designated time to review/revise course equivalencies listed on the BCCAT tables to ensure they are up-to-date.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Institutions with FPMs need to update courses on the tables on BCCAT website and request course-to-course direct transfer for courses that are not currently articulated.
- Individual committee reps to consult with departments and administrators on the three options presented in the BCCAT report.
- Sub-committees will look at option three of the BCCAT report; investigate the development of AA degrees in Sociology and in Anthropology at institutions that do not have them; and discuss actions to be taken to improve the functioning of the FPM in order to be better prepared for next year's discussion.
- Sociology representatives to ask their departments what would be acceptable regarding methods and theory course requirement for the FPM – to be discussed at next year's articulation meeting.

## **9. Issues arising from Institutional Reports**

### **a. International Students**

- The large number of international students continues to pose challenges at most BC institutions. In some institutions, especially the smaller rural institutions, the proportion of international students is as high as 80% - 90%.
- International students tend to be under-prepared for college and university in terms of reading and writing skills. In many cases, students' IELTS scores do not match their actual abilities – i.e. some students' language competencies are at a Grade 10 level or less.
- Institutional practices regarding English proficiency entrance requirements are variable –

e.g. some institutions require in-house language tests, and IELTS score requirements are higher at some institutions than others. A survey was circulated at the meeting to get a sense of practices at various institutions.

- Some students are using enrolment in college/university as a “fast-track” to permanent residency and citizenship. However, many are serious about continuing their academic careers as domestic students (as tuition is far less expensive).
- Plagiarism and cheating among international students is a considerable problem, as is the high failure and low-grade rate, despite the fact that many of these students are doing their best to succeed and genuinely wish to pursue higher education.
- It is difficult to balance support for international students and at the same time prevent grade inflation.
- Some students are ‘bargaining’ with faculty for higher grades and in some cases this can shade over into ‘emotional blackmail’. Faculty are feeling uncomfortable and reluctant to award failing grades, knowing the seriousness of the consequences for these students (e.g. being deported). This situation is enormously stressful for faculty and the fear is that it could potentially have a real impact on the security, safety and well-being of faculty.
- Students are frustrated as their expectations and educational needs are not being met.
- Administrations at individual colleges and universities need to channel the extra revenue from international students’ tuition back into support systems for students. Efforts tend to focus on settlement concerns and increased administrative support, rather than the academic needs of students.
- Support needs to go beyond academic skills and address cultural issues and financial concerns. Failure can often mean shame from family and/or community members supporting international students financially. Students also need an orientation to the culture of the academy – e.g. appropriate behavior in the classroom and in communicating with faculty.
- There is also a lack of adequate support for faculty who are ‘on the front lines’ and are experiencing stress and burn-out in their attempts to modify their teaching practices to address the academic needs of international students, and in dealing with their emotional needs.
- Some colleges and universities are responding to the increased demand for international students by developing ‘internationalization strategies’ that involve designing courses and degree programs specifically aimed at this demographic. For example, Victoria Castillo (Yukon College, Anth) reported that they are looking at developing a two year diploma program tailored for international students that students would complete prior to entering a degree. Trinity has also responded to the influx of international students in degree development. Some institutions are creating new courses on writing and cultural competencies to address the needs of international students. However, the benefit of these programs and courses to students is questionable. Institutional strategies are often ‘band-aid solutions’ that don’t address the real problems.

- At some institutions (e.g. Okanagan College), class sizes are being increased and summer courses are overloaded with international students.
- Concern was expressed that lack of funding and support for international students is an ethical issue (international students are being exploited) and a faculty workload issue.
- It was suggested that many of the issues raised in this discussion need to be addressed by the union, and that an increase in funding from the Ministry of Education to support international students is required.
- It was also noted that this is an issue related to immigration that needs to be addressed by the federal government.

**Motion:** *Due to a shift in immigration policy to use the postsecondary education system as a vehicle to facilitate the entry and education of skilled workers here in Canada resulting in increasing numbers of underprepared students, class sizes, and faculty workload; be it resolved that the Sociology/Anthropology Articulation Committee urges our SLP, Shaun Tyakoff, to work with the BBCAT to follow up with the federal and/or provincial government to address arising issues.*

Moved by Shawkat Shareef (Yukon College)

Seconded: Suzanna Crage (SFU, SA)

Motion carried: unanimously

## 10. Other Business

## 11. Next meeting:

**Location:** UVic / Camosun (Victoria) or, as a backup, Coquitlam College (Vancouver)

**Date:** May 8, 2020

The Chair recommended that specific issues be requested by committee members as agenda items for next year's meeting to ensure their items are addressed.

**Motion** to adjourn – Erin (UVic)

Seconded: Victoria Castillo (Yukon College)

Motion carried unanimously