

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

COUNCIL MEMBERS

FLEMING, Robert	BCCAT Executive Director [CO-CHAIR]
HAMILTON, Jim	Retired President, Okanagan College [CO-CHAIR]
CARDWELL, Steve	Vice-President, Students, Kwantlen Polytechnic University
CRESPIN-MUELLER, Dorys	Executive Director, Integrated Planning & Effectiveness, Thompson Rivers University
DENTON, Kathy	President & CEO, Douglas College
DICK, Brian	Professor and Chair, Engineering, Vancouver Island University
HEMANI, Rummana Khan	Vice-Provost, Students & International & Registrar, Simon Fraser University
KRAUSE, Gerda	Dean, Faculty of Science, Langara College
LOUIE, Brenda	Vice-Principal, Columbia College
McCAUSLAND, Elizabeth	English Instructor, Douglas College
McCREDIE, Karen	Executive Director, EducationPlannerBC
McCULLOUGH, Lisa	Superintendent of Schools, CEO, Schools District No. 48 (Sea to Sky)
NAUGLER, Diane	Dean, Business and Applied Studies, North Island College
O'MEARA, Tami	Dept. Head, Student Access and Support, and Counsellor, Selkirk College
RUSSELL, Carolyn	Executive Director, Global Engagement, University of Victoria

REGRETS: John Chenoweth, Laureen Styles.

STAFF MEMBERS:

DROPOL, Adina	Office Coordinator
BUI, Tu	Project Assistant (Co-op)
CHUN, Anabella	Committee & Technology Support Coordinator
HESLOP, Joanne	Manager, Student Transitions Project
KOOK, Jennifer	Manager, Technology Services
McQUARRIE, Fiona	Special Projects Officer
TIKINA, Anna	Research Officer
WINSEMANN, Mike	Director, Transfer & Technology
YORKSTON, Valerie	Executive Assistant to the Council & Communications Coordinator

GUESTS:

- Ben Ferrel, Acting Executive Director, Post-Secondary Digital Policy & Programs, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training
- Ross Mc Kerlich (*Bccampus*), Project Manager, Micro-Credentials
- Lisanne Watt, Acting Director, Research Universities and Institutional Policy, Strategic Policy & Initiatives Branch, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS – Rob Fleming & Jim Hamilton (Co-Chairs)

JIM: We acknowledge that we are meeting on the unceded territory of the Syilx (Okanagan) people. We also want to acknowledge and thank our host community, the Westbank First Nation.

ROB: We acknowledge that we are gathering on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the x^wməθkwəyám (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlílwata?/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

Statement from Jim Hamilton, BCCAT Co-Chair & Retired President, Okanagan College:

I would ask BCCAT Council and staff members to join me in expressing our deepest sympathies to all the families of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc community (particularly Kamloops) and all of the survivors who have been impacted by the discovery of remains of the 215 children and the unmarked graves on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School.

I know that we are all profoundly saddened by the loss of these children and angered by the injustice and inhumanity of the actions at this and so many other similar schools, the effects of which are being felt across generations, as we know. This is a very stark reminder that we, as a society, have much, much further to go on the path to true reconciliation.

We all have a role to play in stepping up, as do we at BCCAT. We must remain steadfast in our commitment to doing our part in facilitating an ever more accessible, supportive, and inclusive environment in which to live, learn, and work.

Recommended Reading:

[Dark History or Present Reality \(message by Chief Derickson, Westbank First Nation\)](#)

[Statement on Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc / Kamloops Indian Residential School \(KIRS\) Findings](#)

2. PROPOSED AGENDA

The agenda was adopted, as presented.

3. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting (March 12, 2021) were adopted, as presented.

4. GUEST PRESENTATION: Draft Micro-credential Framework Feedback

– Presentation by Ross McKerlich (BCcampus), Project Manager, Micro-Credentials & Lianne Watt, Acting Director, Research Universities and Institutional Policy, Strategic Policy & Initiatives Branch, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Following this presentation, there was some discussion and the following points were raised:

- Feedback at recent articulation committees focused on the question of how micro-credentials are being received by employers. (It was agreed that this project is still in its early stages, so we don't know enough yet to answer this question.)

- Different groups appear to use different definitions of what micro-credentials are, so more clarity (i.e. examples) would be helpful. (The working definition for the framework project is that micro-credentials are “formal, short duration learning experiences that are competency-based and can be assessed and recognized for employment or learning purposes.”)
- It’s also important to distinguish what micro-credentials are **not**.

Council members were invited to provide feedback going forward. Feedback from Council, committees and articulation committee members could be particularly helpful.

5. BUDGET & WORK PLAN

5.1. 2020-21 Budget – R. Fleming

5.1.1. 2020-21 Budget FYE Final

Due to substantial savings on travel expenses and meetings, there was an additional surplus of \$48,672 remaining at year end.

5.2. 2021-22 Budget & Work Plan – R. Fleming

5.2.1. Budget Update

Rob confirmed Ministry approval of status quo funding for 2021-22. He also referred members to quarterly reporting as of May 26/21.

5.2.2. 2021-22 Projects & Activities

The chart of 2021/22 projects and activities was provided as an overview.

5.3. 2020-21 Annual Review – V. Yorkston

Val Yorkston introduced the 2020-21 Annual Review, “Connections: Supporting educational pathways for diverse learners”. The report takes a look at key ways BCCAT has worked this past year to strengthen collaboration and connections vital for learner access and mobility as transfer partners have faced remarkable challenges due to COVID-19.

Val expressed appreciation to Tu Bui (currently BCCAT’s Coop Assistant) for her design and layout work on both the report and the infographic. When finalized, the full Annual Review package will be sent to the Ministry shortly, and published and announced shortly thereafter.

MOTION: To accept BCCAT’s 2020-21 Annual Review,

“Connections: Supporting educational pathways as a collaborative community”.

B. Dick / E. McCausland **CARRIED**

6. COUNCIL BUSINESS

6.1. Provincial Issues and Developments

6.1.1. Ministry Update – B. Ferrel

Ben introduced himself, and provided an overview of current issues and developments at the Ministry.

First and foremost, Ben referred to a recent letter from the Deputy Minister, calling for renewed commitment to ensuring that their work and policies “contribute to meaningful reconciliation, healing, and transformation”, and to the ongoing implementation of the Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action, in support of the self-determination of the Indigenous peoples.

A restructuring is taking place at the Ministry to support a more holistic approach to working relationships with partner organizations and agencies, and to align more with key priorities.

Dr. Bonnie Henry spoke at two recent townhall events to inform those working in post-secondary education (including students). Government update about COVID-19: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>. As restrictions ease, the Minister may finally be in a position to visit campuses.

Key priorities to support students through the post-COVID recovery period include the following:

- Digital Services Strategy – building on the recent successes of post-secondary institutions, the Ministry is looking at supporting streamlined access to services for students (Student Aid BC, WorkBC, EducationPlannerBC) – to ensure more intuitive processes for students.
- Digital Learning Advisory Committee – in support of post-secondary institutions, looking to better understand and support online and blended learning models. Just launched a Digital Learning Advisory Committee (experts from across the system).
- BC Access Grant program – reviewing, looking to expand eligibility to reach more individuals.
- Former Youth in Care – looking to remove age restrictions to enable access to a number of different programs (e.g. Tuition Waiver Program).
- Early Childhood Education – funding to support 1,000 seats over the next 3 years.
- Workforce Readiness Plan – partnering with Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery & Innovation, consulting with industry and advisory groups to develop strategy for those in workforce who may need to transition.
- Micro-Credentials: Micro-credentials framework project: 23 credentials currently offered across 14 institutions, with over 2300 enrollments. Final reports are in process to look at lessons learned. Additional funding (\$5M) for upcoming year for new micro-credential programs.
- Health & Human Services – To address labour market demand, the Ministry is allocating funding to increase seat capacity for post-secondary programs.
- Coop and Work Integrated programs – additional funding (\$5.5M), 3,000 student placements.
- EducationPlannerBC – Ministry has been working together with SFU to establish a service agreement. Next year, the first amendment will address intellectual property. As part of the Ministry’s digital services strategy, working with EducationPlannerBC, and other partner organizations to look at integration or alignment of digital services, such as PEN allocation, applying for student assistance, ordering transcripts, etc.

6.1.2. EducationPlannerBC (EPBC) Update – *K. McCredie*

Karen reported that UBC has now gone live with EducationPlannerBC’s application service, following a pilot which ended at the end of March. The University of Victoria is on track for a summer launch. Karen noted a significant increase in applications (21% overall, and 24% domestic applications).

Meanwhile, the EPBC website is undergoing a substantial redesign to improve access and usability for students. EPBC is working with the Ministry and other system agencies to examine opportunities for integration (e.g. PEN validation, applying for student aid), in order to streamline processes for students.

Other ongoing work includes onboarding to the transcript exchange service, and enhancing trades information on the EPBC site. EPBC is also incorporating translation for BC's 10 most commonly used languages using MOSAIC. (There was some discussion as to whether we might consider providing this on the BC Transfer Guide website.)

Meanwhile, EPBC is winding up after a very busy engagement season, having delivered 400 presentations to over 10,000 students, 3,000 parents, and 500 counsellors on how to use the EPBC site.

6.1.3 Indigenous Language Programs – *R. Fleming*

Rob spoke about discussions at the last Indigenous Articulation Committee about articulation challenges and opportunities concerning the new language fluency programs. He noted the excitement surrounding these new program offerings, and that this marks the start of some very important articulation conversations.

6.2. Staff Report to Council on External Activities - *R. Fleming*

The staff report was provided for information. Rob Fleming reported that this has been a heavy engagement period for BCCAT staff, as staff members have connected with faculty, deans, and administrators to continue support particularly concerning the impact of COVID on post-secondary institutions and students. Throughout the pandemic, these interactions have reinforced the reality that BCCAT is not merely the staff, Council, and committees, but also the vital networks across the post-secondary system that work together in support of student mobility.

ACTION: Kathy Denton suggested supplementing the staff report to provide more detail where appropriate through a verbal summary report on key activities by the executive director. This practice will be adopted for future meetings.

6.3. Council Membership – *Rob Fleming*

6.3.1. *Ex Officio* Appointment

Given the alignment between BCCAT and EducationPlannerBC in supporting access and admissions processes, practices, and services for BC students and post-secondary institutions, close consultation and collaboration between the two is vital for ensuring effectiveness and efficiency. For this reason, Rob Fleming sits as an *ex officio* member on EducationPlannerBC's Steering Committee.

Now that EducationPlannerBC has been established as a distinct agency (separate from BCcampus), operating under its own governance and management structure, it is proposed that a corresponding *ex officio* position should be created on the Council, for the Executive Director of EducationPlannerBC. As per the memorandum of understanding, BCCAT and EducationPlannerBC share common technical resources and protocols where necessary and possible, and will collaborate on system initiatives and research as appropriate. (The planned research in support of ethnicity, diversity, and inclusion on this year's work plan is such an example.)

MOTION: To recommend the addition of an ongoing ex officio appointment to Council to be filled by the Executive Director of EducationPlannerBC.

S. Cardwell / D. Crespin-Mueller **CARRIED**

ACTION: Rob Fleming will follow up with the Ministry regarding process for consideration and Ministry approval.

6.3.2. Guidelines for Student Nominees

Given the difficulties in identifying prospective student nominees for appointment to Council, at the request of Council (March 2020 meeting), BCCAT staff consulted with the Ministry about broadening the criteria for prospective nominees.

In the past, a priority has been to identify a student with direct experience with credit transfer, but this expectation narrows the pool of candidates considerably, and has not proven to be the most relevant criterion for students serving on Council. More important to the role of student representative on Council is that the individual has the time and interest in engaging with Council and its work, as well as a general interest in public policy and governance.

Rob Fleming offered suggested revisions to the text of Council Governance 1A Policy (*BCCAT Mandate, Membership, Role and Responsibilities*) allowing for the consideration of student nominees across programs and levels of study, including graduate students and recent alumni.

In principle, Ministry staff have been supportive of the changes as outlined above. Unfortunately, given disruptions and competing priorities emerging in spring 2020 as a result of the onset of the pandemic, BCCAT was not able to implement the nomination criteria changes for the fall 2020 appointment period, or to identify a suitable student for nomination. Subsequently, Council has discussed whether or not appointing a student to Council is necessary given many alternate ways to engage students through, for example, consultation forums, focus groups, and coop.

At this point it seems premature to pursue the path of eliminating the student position on Council since earlier changes in guidelines have not yet been implemented. BCCAT staff recommend working with the Ministry on implementation of the new criteria through the appointment process in 2021.

MOTION: To accept the proposed revision to “Guidelines for Student Nominees for Council Appointment” and pursue implementation in consultation with Ministry staff.

K. McCredie / E. McCausland **CARRIED**

ACTION: BCCAT staff will work with Ministry staff to determine and implement guideline changes as part of the annual nominations process, and by seeking Minister approval if determined necessary.

7. TECHNOLOGIES/WEBSITES

7.1. Transfer Credit System (TCS) Update – M. Winsemann

Mike Winsemann spoke briefly about enhancements to the Transfer Credit Service (TCS) currently underway. In particular, the focus is on improving the dashboard to improve the rate of response for institutions or faculty, and provide more access to real-time data. We are also looking at developing other features, including listing course attributes (e.g. lab credit) and allowing for reciprocity of agreements where appropriate. Another key project involves developing a clear process for articulation maintenance.

TCS users are providing feedback to help with this.

7.2. BCTransferGuide.ca – *M. Winsemann*

The BC Transfer Guide website is undergoing a major redesign. We will be using a new content management service and looking at streamlining search interfaces to make the site more user-friendly and efficient.

Meanwhile, Jennifer Kook is working on a “Pathways” projects with a view to providing information on transfer pathways that do not fall neatly under traditional categories. The goal is to be more inclusive and provide a more comprehensive picture of transfer pathway opportunities for students. Those who are interested in being involved in this work can contact Jen Kook. (Jen will also be putting out a call for feedback over the summer.)

Karen McCredie noted that EPBC would like to be involved with the Pathways project, and Ben Ferrel also suggested that it might be useful for us to connect with someone on his team - a content strategist with user experience background, as part of this over-arching effort to streamline information that is currently offered through many different channels.

7.2.1. Launch of Expanded Site – *Demo by M. Winsemann*

Mike gave a brief demo of the new international interface on the site, due to the expansion to include inter-provincial and international transfer agreements. Seven BC transfer system member institutions onboarded this project to allow these agreements to be imported to the BC Transfer Guide, and as a result, students around the world are now able to search for transfer decisions to identify the credit they would receive at those seven institutions for learning they obtained outside of BC. The expansion incorporated 61,000 new agreements from 452 institutions in 33 countries. For more information, see <https://www.bccat.ca/pubs/resources/BiggerBCTG2021.pdf>

7.2.2. Integration of ABE Equivalencies - *Demo by M. Winsemann*

Mike also demonstrated how Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses are now more easily searchable on the site, as data from the previous guides (annually published PDFs) were put into a database format on the website. This eliminates the need for the Ministry to continue publishing the PDF guides, and makes searching more accessible and efficient for students.

Mike noted that there is other subject-specific transfer information that may also be brought into the database. The next step will be incorporating English as an Additional Language (EAL) courses.

8. ADMISSIONS

8.1. Admissions Committee – *K. McCredie (Chair)*

(Last Meeting: January 29, 2021; Next Meeting: September 24, 2021)

There were no committee updates as the group had not met since January.

8.2 Admissions Projects – *A. Tikina*

Anna provided updates on the following projects:

a) Data Collection Supporting Equity, Data, and Inclusion

This is the first joint BCCAT/EducationPlannerBC project. An advisory group has been set up, and a contract has been signed with a UBC. The research team also plans to employ student research assistants. The project will involve a systematic review of websites and institutional policies, with a goal to explore whether a more consistent approach to recording such data is possible.

b) Pathway Partnerships with Indigenous Post-Secondary Institutions

The project aims to identify successful practices in the development, implementation and on-going maintenance of pathways specifically intended to support indigenous learners through the recognition of prior post-secondary learning. The draft is expected in the summer.

c) Pandemic Response: Admissions & Registrarial Policies

This study will capture key changes in admissions and registrarial policies implemented to support students and to respond to institutional challenges during the pandemic. This will involve examining information and interviewing focus groups.

Fiona McQuarrie also provided an update about the following project:

a) Successful Practices in Supporting Students with Lived Experience in Care

The goal of this project is to identify successful practices in supporting persistence and success of students attending BC public post-secondary institutions and receiving the Provincial Tuition Waiver. The original target date was mid-June, but there has been a data collection delay. It is hoped that the report will be submitted by the end of Summer.

In response to a query, Fiona confirmed that the project contractor has been looking at system supports in addition to those provided by institutions.

9. RESEARCH

9.1. Research Committee – D. Crespin-Mueller (Chair)

(Last Meeting: February 5, 2021; Next Meeting: October 8, 2021)

Dorys provided brief updates on the status of two new projects, noting our commitment to building on work already underway at institutions, rather than creating new work for them.

a) Impact of COVID on Online Learning in Rural and Remote Communities

This project will utilize institutional data and interviews to explore how access to technology, and other learning resources, have affected students in rural and remote communities during the 2020-2021 period of remote delivery. To date, inviting four institutions have been planned, but there is room for more institutional participants.

b) Pandemic Response: Student Surveys

This study aims at creating a repository of student surveys conducted at BC post-secondary institutions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Opportunities for meta-analysis of the survey data will be pursued if possible.

9.2. Research Projects – A. Tikina

Anna Tikina then provided updates on two other continuing projects:

a) *Exploring Students' Motivations for Credit Accumulation*

The goal of this project is to explore the motivations, experiences and perceptions of transfer and direct entry students regarding the credits they complete at BC Transfer System institutions – particularly those beyond the strict program requirements for their chosen credential(s). The final draft report has been received, and we hope to publish the report in the Fall.

b) *Exploring Credit Accumulation in Pathways Programs*

The project aims to assess the number of credits to graduation in pathway programs and to explore the experiences of transfer students and of direct entry students enrolled in the same program areas at BC Transfer System institutions. The project is looking at data from four institutions, as well as Student Transitions Project (STP) data, and student survey responses. The draft report is expected in the summer.

10. TRANSFER & ARTICULATION

10.1. Transfer & Articulation Committee – D. Naugler (Chair)

(Last Meeting: May 17, 2021; Next Meeting: September 20, 2021)

Diane gave a brief update on recent developments, noting the committee's enthusiasm regarding the importing of Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) courses into the searchable database on the BC Transfer Guide. This eliminates the need for annual publications of PDFs which are not as easily accessed and quickly become out of date.

Diane also reported that, in supporting articulation committees, BCCAT is moving to a new standalone Moodle platform (hosted by BCNET rather than Kwantlen Polytechnic)

ACTION: The draft minutes of the May 2021 meeting will be provided in the next Council meeting agenda package.

10.1.1. Course Definitions – Terms of Reference (Discussion Item) – M. Winsemann

In recent years, the Transfer Credit System (TCS) has been expanded to include non-BC and international equivalencies, which are now published in the BC Transfer Guide. In addition, plans are in process to incorporate Adult Basic Education (ABE) equivalencies, eliminating the need for a stand-alone guide for ABE courses. Further, with the increasing prevalence of diverse curricular models, interdisciplinary studies, and separate articulation guides for disciplines such as English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Applied Business Technology (ABT), a shared informal understanding of what constitutes a “university level”, credit-based course is both lacking and insufficient for determining which courses should be included in the BC Transfer Guide.

An *ad hoc* working group is being formed to assist in the development of a course definition and inclusion policy for the BC Transfer Guide. The working group will review current practices, and make recommendations regarding which types of courses should be articulated on a course-by-course basis within the BC Transfer Guide. The TAC will review the recommendations, and if endorsed, refer the recommendations to Council for consideration.

In discussion, members noted the importance of having people on the working group who have strong experience and tenure in the system, and the need for careful and cautious consideration of the broader implications of proposed changes.

10.2. Articulation Committees – *M. Winsemann*

10.2.1. Spring Update

The [Spring Update](#) provides an update on key projects and activities for the articulation community. It was provided for information.

10.3. TAC Projects – *M. Winsemann & F. McQuarrie*

Fiona McQuarrie gave a brief update on the following report:

Assessing Sending Institutions Outside of the BC Transfer System

The purpose of this study is to review the criteria that BC Transfer System member institutions use to assess sending institutions, in the context of transfer credit requests, and to provide recommendations in relation to this process. The report is in its final stages, pending verification from institutional registrars regarding the data.

11. COMMUNICATIONS – *V. Yorkston*

11.1. 2021 BCCAT Transfer Awards

The [2021 Transfer Awards](#) has been launched and nominations are welcome. Val encouraged Council and staff to spread the word and look out for potential nominees. She also invited Council member volunteers to sit on the Awards Committee to assist with adjudication, and expressed her appreciation to Carolyn Russell and Tami O’Meara for their participation on the committee. The Terms of Reference allow for both Carolyn and Tami to continue on the committee for one year after finishing their terms as Council members, and she thanked them both for their willingness to do so.

12. INTER-PROVINCIAL/INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES – *R. Fleming*

12.1. CATCan Meetings

Ontario (OnCAT) is interested in BC’s technology platform as they look to upgrade their transfer technologies. Rob noted the importance of leveraging and aligning provincial systems, noting that intellectual property matters will need to be worked to support a licensing agreement for OnCAT.

12.2. PCCAT Learning Day: June 17, 2021 <https://www.pccat.ca/conference/>

BCCAT is helping to host this virtual event, and Council members are welcome to register and participate. The agenda is available at the link provided.

12.3. Groningen Declaration Network (GDN)

Rob Fleming noted the Call for Proposals for this upcoming, hybrid conference. <https://www.groningendeclaration.org/2021/05/11/2021-call-for-proposals/>

13. IN THE NEWS (for info only) – R. Fleming

Click here to view news links: <https://mailchi.mp/72b28d48d017/gd0mdypkrv-5172978>

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other items of business.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm.