

Articulation Committees: Their Essential Role in a Successful Transfer System

British Columbia's post-secondary Transfer System consists of all B.C. public institutions, Yukon College and those private institutions which have been approved to participate through a provincial quality assessment process. Within the Transfer System, smooth student mobility between institutions is supported by all partners. Articulation committees play a critical role in that process and this paper provides a succinct overview of that role.

There are 70 articulation committees currently recognized by the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT). They exist for most disciplines or programs that are delivered in more than one B.C. post-secondary institution. There are committees for academic programs (*e.g.* Philosophy, Math, English), applied and professional programs (*e.g.* Nursing, Adult Education, Tourism Management), vocational, trades and technical programs (*e.g.* Drafting, Automotive Service Technician, Welding) and Adult Basic Education programs.

The Terms of Reference for articulation committees state that their purpose is to "expand educational opportunities for students by facilitating transfer of students from one educational institution to another." Discipline specialists normally come together once a year to share information, and engage in discussions related to curricular matters, particularly those affecting student mobility. For articulation committees in technical, vocational and preparatory fields, these discussions often centre on provincial curriculum and shared objectives, while for the committees in academic and professional disciplines topics most often revolve around course equivalencies and transfer relationships.

While specific transfer credit is not usually negotiated in detail at articulation committee meetings, deliberations at the meetings lead to common

understandings regarding course objectives and outcomes, and relevant teaching methodologies. Professional working relationships are fostered among disciplinary colleagues throughout the system. At effective meetings current and potential transfer problems can be discussed, as well as ways to deal with or prevent those problems. Notice of upcoming curriculum changes can be given and common professional issues can be reviewed. Where possible, committees also have a member from the secondary school system who provides valuable linkages to teachers of that curriculum and to issues related to secondary to post-secondary transitions.

All institutions offering a particular program are expected to send a representative to the annual meeting of the relevant articulation committee. The cost of attendance is borne by each institution. The successful functioning of articulation committees depends on the ability of each representative to provide effective liaison between his/her own department, the committee, and other institutions. It is vital, therefore, that institutions select as their representatives individuals who are "experienced members of their departments" (ideally department heads) and who are exceptionally well informed regarding articulation matters.

Inter-institutional credit transfer is a key aspect of the BC post-secondary system, providing mobility and facilitating efficient credential completion mechanisms for all students. At the same time, each institution is autonomous in matters of admissions, curriculum design and standards. Articulation committees provide an essential link between autonomous institutions offering related programs, and as such are a critical factor in the smooth functioning of a successful integrated and coordinated transfer system.

(continued overleaf...)

For much more information about articulation committees please see the Articulation Committee Handbook. A copy can be obtained from BCCAT, or downloaded from our website. Go to <http://www.bccat.bc.ca> and click on the “Articulation Committees” link.

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List of Currently Recognized Articulation Committees

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- ABE (Computer Studies) Working Group
- ABE (Education & Career Planning) Working Group
- ABE (English) Working Group
- ABE (Fundamental) Working Group
- ABE (Math) Working Group
- ABE (Science) Working Group
- ABE (Social Science) Working Group
- ABE Steering Committee
- Adult Education
- Adult English as a Second Language
- Adult Special Education
- Adventure Tourism
- Agriculture/Horticulture
- American Sign Language
- Applied Business Technology (ABT)/ Office Administration
- Auto Parts & Light Warehousing
- Automotive Collision Repair & Refinishing
- Automotive Service Technician
- Biology
- Business Administration
- Carpentry
- Chemistry
- Commerce
- Communications
- Computing Education
- Creative Writing
- Criminology
- Dental Educators
- Drafting Technologies
- Early Childhood Education
- Earth Sciences
- Economics
- Electrical
- Electronics Engineering Technology
- Electronics Technician
- Engineering
- English
- Environmental Programs
- Film Studies
- First Nations Studies
- Forestry
- Geography
- Heavy Duty/Commercial Transport/ Diesel Engines
- History
- Home Support/Resident Care Attendant
- Hospitality Management
- Human Service Programs
- Mathematics/Statistics
- Media & Communication Studies
- Millwright/Machinists
- Music
- Nursing
- Outdoor Power Equipment/Motorcycle/Marine
- Philosophy
- Physical Education & Kinesiology
- Physics
- Piping Trades
- Political Science
- Practical Nursing
- Professional Cook Training
- Psychology
- S.C.O.L.A. (Standing Committee on Language Articulation)
- Sheet Metal
- Sociology/Anthropology
- Theatre
- Tourism Management
- Travel Programs
- Visual Arts & Design
- Welding
- Women’s Studies

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