

# Research Results

July 2007

## 2006 Mobility of Transfer Students in BC

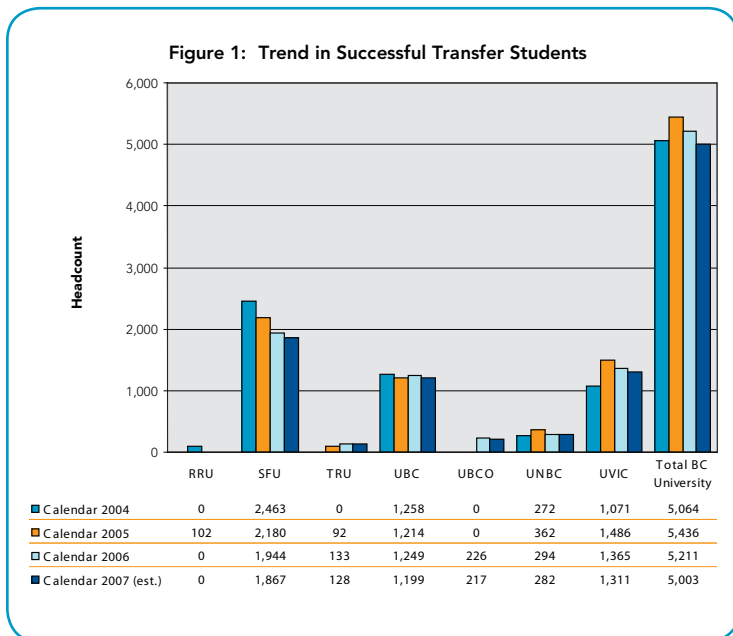
Prepared for BCCAT by Dale Box

In the last two years, the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) has conducted research on the number of potential and eligible transfer students in colleges, university colleges, and institutes in the fall of each year and the number that enrolled in a BC public university in the subsequent year with transfer as the basis of admission. The research results that follow present the key findings from the 2005-06 mobility data, along with some comparisons to 2004-05 data. This research has been conducted under the auspices of the Student Transitions Project (STP) with funding from BCCAT. The pivot tables and accompanying work sheets (sent to institutions in early May) provide a wealth of information specific to each institution, and can be accessed through each institution's Registrar and Institutional Research Director.

### In this Report you will Find:

- Transfers to universities down by 4.1% (Fig. 1) p.1
- Most colleges, university colleges, and institutes show declines in transfers to universities (Fig. 2) p.2
- Students transferring to universities with about the same credits and slightly lower GPAs (Fig. 3 & 4) p.3
- Overall transfer ratios up by 1% (Table 2) p.4
- Pool of students eligible to transfer to a university down by 4.3% (Table 4) p.5
- 48% of students eligible to transfer remain at a college, university college, or institute (Fig. 8) p.8
- Project Background p.8

### Trends - Successful Transfer Students down by 4.1% from 2005 to 2006



- **Figure 1** shows the number of *Successful Transfer Students* from BC public colleges, university colleges, and institutes (i.e., the Central Data Warehouse or CDW institutions) to the seven receiving institutions (BC public universities). A *Successful Transfer Student* is a student who was admitted to a university on the basis of having completed a minimum number of credits in courses in a college, university college, or institute that are transferable to BC universities. An examination of all Successful Transfer Students in a given year, whose last known sending term was the previous or earlier (see Table 1), indicates that Successful Transfer Students have declined by 4.1% in 2006 compared to 2005. However, there was a 2.9% increase in Successful Transfer Students between 2004 and 2006.<sup>1</sup>
- **Figure 1** also provides a prediction on the number of Successful Transfer Students for the upcoming calendar year (2007). Using transfer ratios derived from both the Eligible Transfer Students<sup>2</sup> and Successful Transfer Students in 2006, an estimate of 2007 Successful Transfer Students is possible. Assuming the conditions remain unchanged, the model estimates that there will be 5003 Successful Transfer Students in 2007. If correct, the model estimates a further 4% decrease over 2006.

<sup>1</sup> Calendar 2004 data have been revised from previous reports due to the restatement of the number of Successful Transfer Students admitted to UVic. The restatement is the result of including admission from terms in addition to Fall 2004.

<sup>2</sup> More information on Successful, Potential, and Eligible Transfer Students is found on page 8.

## Current Year – Successful Transfer Students

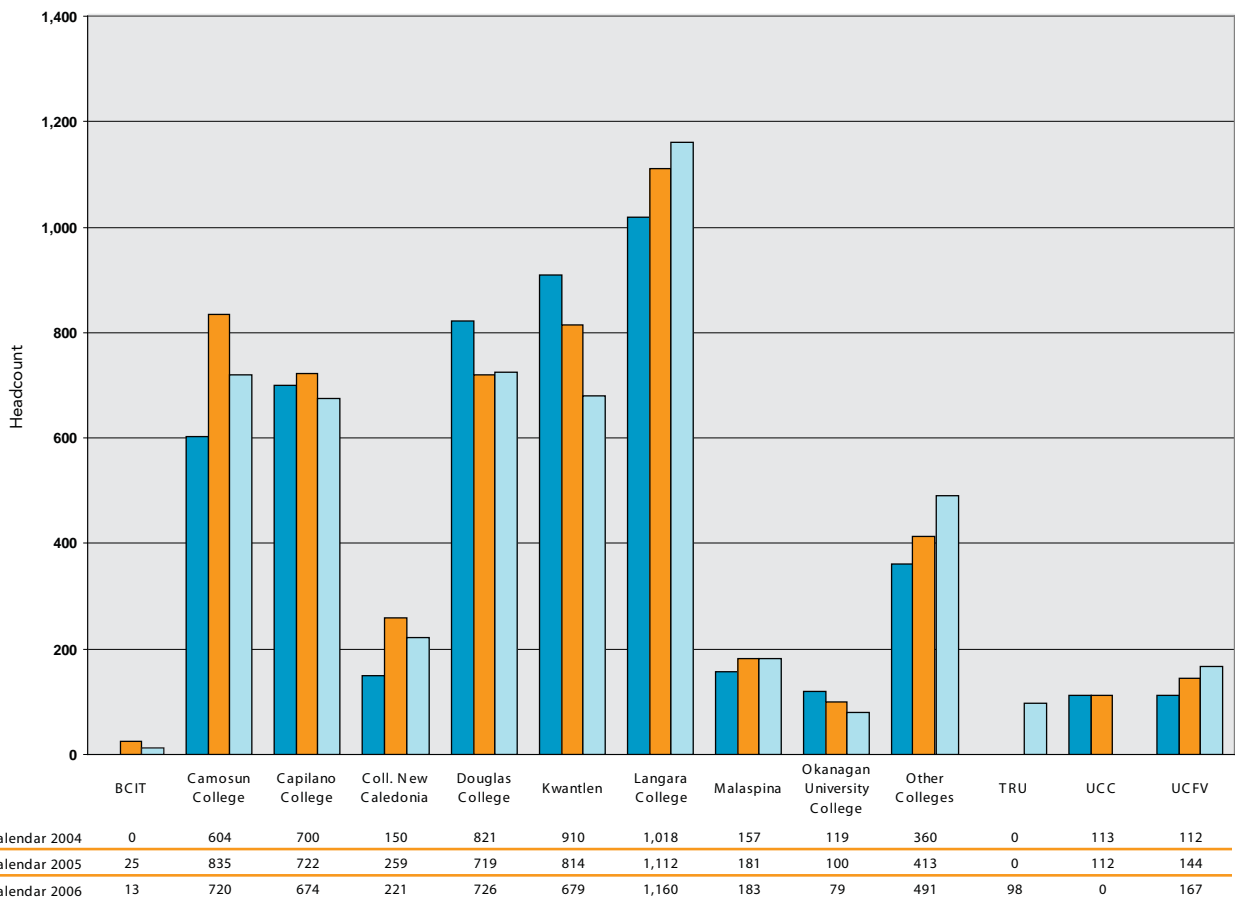
**Table 1: 2006 Successful Transfer Students Based on Last Known Sending Term/Year**

		SFU	TRU	UBC	UBCO	UNBC	UVIC	Total - BC University
Status	Fall 2005 CDW Students	1681	71	1055	170	215	1080	4272
	One Year Stop Outs (Winter, Spring, Fall 2004)	182	37	126	32	49	198	624
	Two Year Stop Outs (Winter, Spring, Fall 2003)	48	6	36	14	14	39	157
	More than Two Year Stop Outs	33	19	32	10	16	48	158
Total		1944	133	1249	226	294	1365	5211

- Table 1** provides information on the number of Successful Transfer Students at each university in 2006. The number of Successful Transfer Students who attended a CDW institution in 2005 was 4272. Of those students who chose to stop out for a period of time before transferring, 624 stopped out for one year, 157 stopped out for two years and 158 stopped out for more than two years. Thus, the vast majority of Successful Transfer Students (82%) chose to transfer directly to a university once they had completed their studies at a CDW institution.

## Successful Transfer Students - Trends by CDW Institutions

**Figure 2: Trends - Successful Transfer Students by Institution**

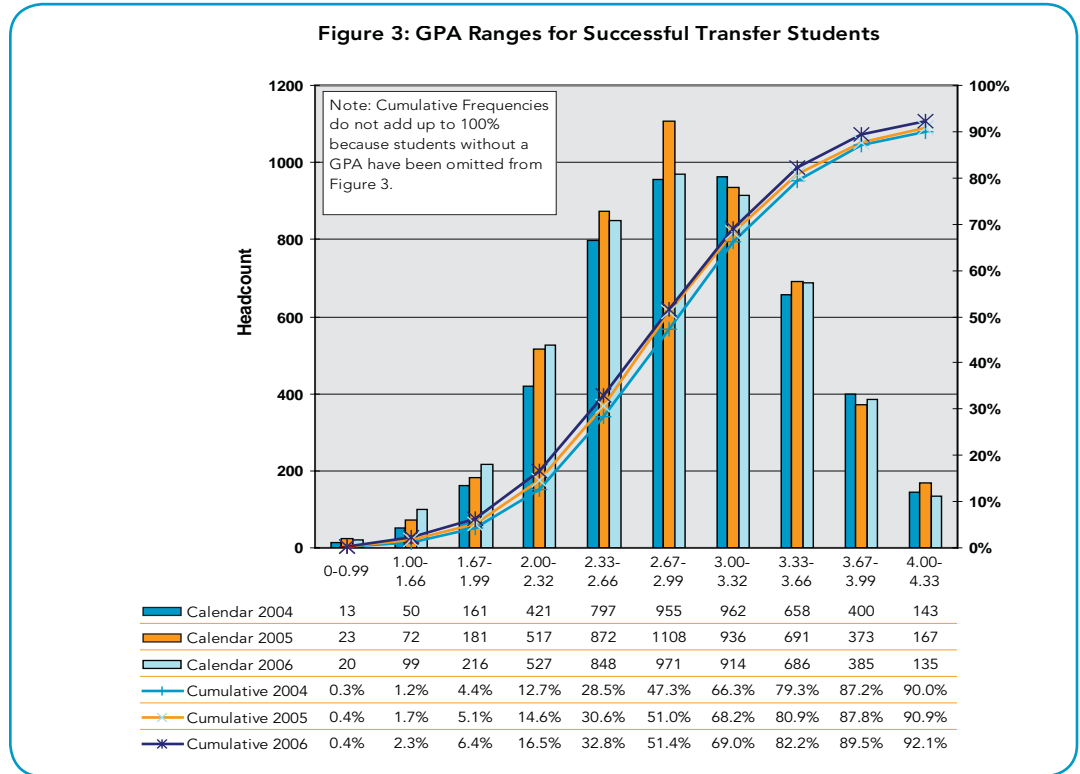


- Figure 2** presents trends in the number of Successful Transfer Students broken down by sending institution, with Other Colleges<sup>3</sup> grouped into one category. In terms of headcount, Langara and Camosun have seen the largest increase over the three years and Kwantlen has seen the largest decrease. One potential reason for this decrease could be due to Kwantlen establishing more degrees in the Arts (further research is required to verify this result), and retaining their own students.

<sup>3</sup> Other Colleges who had relatively few Successful Transfer Students include: Institute of Indigenous Government, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Northern Lights College, North Island College, Northwest Community College, Okanagan College, College of the Rockies, Selkirk College, Thompson Rivers U - Open Learning, and Vancouver Community College. Colleges were classified based on the number of Successful Transfer Students from their institution.

## Successful Transfer Students - Trends in GPA

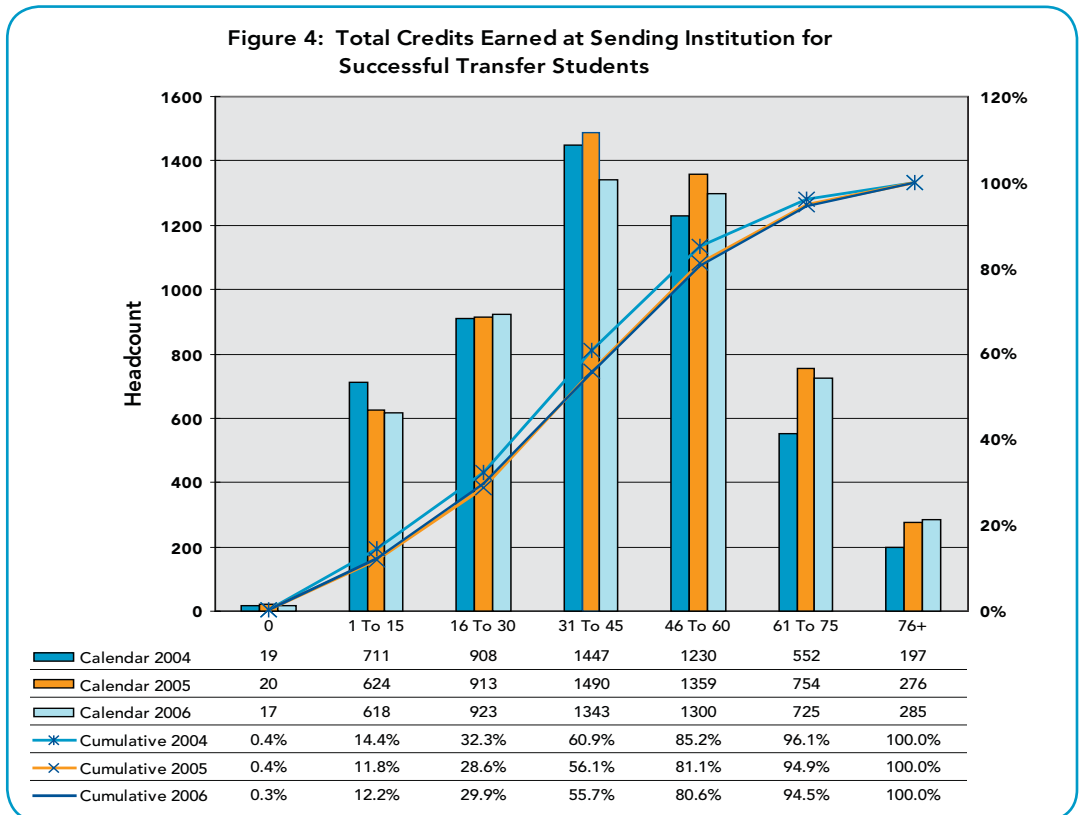
- Figure 3** presents data for the Successful Transfer Students for the past three years by GPA range. The data indicate that the percentage of Successful Transfer Students admitted with transfer as the basis of admission with a B+ (3.33) or higher has remained relatively unchanged over the past three years. However, there has been an *increase* in the number of students admitted with less than a B- (2.67): 2.2 percentage points from calendar 2005 to calendar 2006, and 4.3 percentage points from calendar 2004 to calendar 2006. There was also a 1.7 percentage point *decrease* in the number of students admitted with a GPA between a B- (2.67) and a B+ (3.33) from calendar 2004 to calendar 2006.



## Successful Transfer Students - Trends in Credits Earned

- Figure 4** presents data for the Successful Transfer Students for the past three years broken down by credit range. Students appear to be transferring somewhat sooner to a university with 29.9% of the students transferring with 30 or fewer credits in calendar 2006 compared to 28.6% in calendar 2005. However, further research is required to determine if this is the beginning of a trend.

The data in Figures 3 and 4 indicate that students are transferring to a university with about the same number of credits but with slightly lower GPAs.



## Trends – Transfer Ratios from CDW Institutions

- **Table 2** presents the *transfer ratio* for each CDW institution over the previous three years, while **Figure 5** focuses on the 2006 transfer ratio. The transfer ratio is calculated by taking the number of Successful Transfer Students for a given calendar year and dividing it by the number of Eligible Transfer Students for the previous term. The data indicate that, for the larger CDW institutions, the transfer ratio is fairly constant. However, for both the Northern Region and the Vancouver Island Region the transfer ratio has considerable variation.
- Of the larger institutions, BCIT has the lowest transfer ratio for calendar 2005 and 2006 and Langara has the highest transfer ratio for 2006 while Camosun has the highest ratio for 2005 (the 8.3% increase was, in part, a consequence of UVic substantially increasing the number of transfer students for calendar 2005).
- Of the university colleges, UCFV has the lowest transfer ratio while Kwantlen has the highest ratio. The low transfer ratios at UCFV, Malaspina, and Thompson Rivers likely reflect the fact that students are opting to stay at these institutions to complete their degrees.

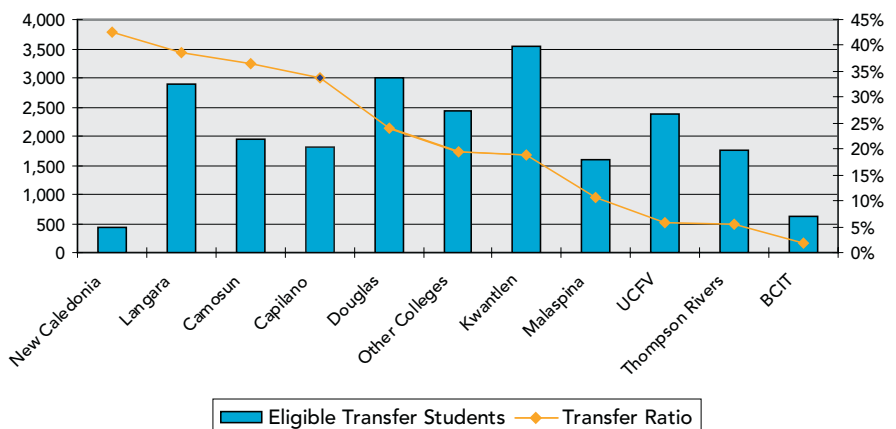
**Note:** Transfer ratios reflect not only mobility of students but also curriculum design. Institutions that include university transfer courses (such as English, Math and Psych) in applied programs such as Business that are not necessarily intended for transfer will have lower transfer ratios.

**Over the past three years the transfer ratio has been increasing, which indicates that a higher proportion of Eligible Transfer Students are transferring to university even though the pool of Eligible Transfer Students is declining. (See Table 4)**

**Table 2: Trends in Transfer Ratios**

	CALENDAR 2004	CALENDAR 2005	CALENDAR 2006
<b>SENDING INSTITUTION</b>			
<b>Special Purpose Institutions</b>			
British Columbia Institute of Technology		3.3%	1.8%
Institute of Indigenous Government	50.0%	25.0%	45.9%
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	25.8%	11.5%	8.4%
Open Learning Agency	25.6%	21.6%	---
Thompson Rivers U - Open Learning	---	---	22.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>
<b>Total without Open Learning Agency</b>	<b>32.6%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
<b>Northern Region</b>			
College of New Caledonia	31.4%	54.2%	42.6%
Northern Lights College	21.5%	33.7%	45.7%
Northwest Community College	29.4%	42.6%	29.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.4%</b>	<b>48.7%</b>	<b>39.9%</b>
<b>Interior Region</b>			
College of the Rockies	22.1%	19.0%	22.5%
Okanagan University College	6.3%	4.7%	---
Okanagan College	---	---	13.7%
Selkirk College	31.0%	40.0%	44.5%
University College of the Cariboo	6.9%	6.3%	---
Thompson Rivers University	---	---	5.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>
<b>Vancouver Region</b>			
Capilano College	34.1%	33.6%	33.6%
Douglas College	27.2%	22.6%	23.9%
Langara College	32.4%	34.3%	38.6%
Vancouver Community College	10.5%	16.3%	14.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>31.6%</b>
<b>Fraser Valley Region</b>			
Kwantlen University College	25.9%	23.1%	18.9%
University College of the Fraser Valley	5.0%	5.4%	5.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>
<b>Vancouver Island Region</b>			
Camosun College	33.6%	41.9%	36.5%
Malaspina University-College	7.4%	9.9%	10.6%
North Island College	9.8%	18.3%	13.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.7%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>22.2%</b>
<b>Grand Total Without BCIT</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>22.0%</b>	<b>22.9%</b>

**Figure 5: 2005 Eligible Transfer Students and 2006 Transfer Ratio for CDW Institutions**



## Trends – Potential Transfer Students down by 1.2% from 2005 to 2006

- Over 58,000 *Potential Transfer Students* were enrolled at CDW institutions in the fall of 2006. A *Potential Transfer Student* is any student who is enrolled in or has completed at least one course listed in the BC Transfer Guide. **Table 3** provides the number of Potential Transfer Students over the last four years. Excluding BCIT<sup>4</sup>, the drop over the four year period is 5,785 students (9.4%). Thirteen of the 20 institutions experienced year-over-year drops in the number of Potential Transfer Students.

**Table 3: Trends - Potential Transfer Students (Headcount)**

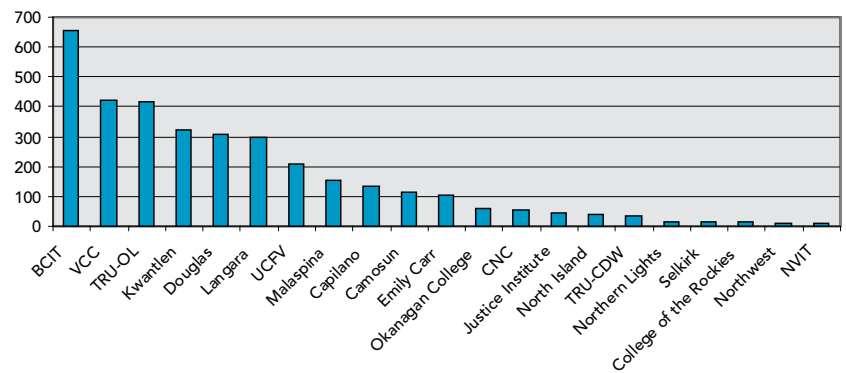
SENDING INSTITUTION	LAST KNOWN SENDING TERM (FALL)				2005 to 2006
	2003	2004	2005	2006	% change
<b>Special Purpose Institutions</b>					
British Columbia Institute of Technology		3152	3063	2838	-7.3%
Institute of Indigenous Government	99	138	119	n/a	
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	163	219	216	211	-2.3%
Open Learning Agency	2008	1798	---	---	---
Thompson Rivers U - Open Learning	---	---	1598	1093	-31.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>5,307</b>	<b>4,996</b>	<b>4,142</b>	<b>-17.1%</b>
<b>Total without Open Learning Agency</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>3,509</b>	<b>3,398</b>	<b>3,049</b>	<b>-10.3%</b>
<b>Northern Region</b>					
College of New Caledonia	1843	1756	1619	1399	-13.6%
Northern Lights College	474	443	304	265	-12.8%
Northwest Community College	670	594	596	603	1.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,987</b>	<b>2,793</b>	<b>2,519</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>-10.0%</b>
<b>Interior Region</b>					
College of the Rockies	728	716	660	619	-6.2%
Okanagan University College	4792	5041	---	---	---
Okanagan College	---	---	2332	2838	21.7%
Selkirk College	881	798	750	692	-7.7%
University College of the Cariboo	4300	4226	---	---	---
Thompson Rivers University	---	---	4353	4290	-1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,701</b>	<b>10,781</b>	<b>8,095</b>	<b>8,439</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>Vancouver Region</b>					
Capilano College	4981	4828	4735	4453	-6.0%
Douglas College	7877	7554	6634	7257	9.4%
Langara College	7880	7594	7354	7164	-2.6%
Vancouver Community College	397	365	401	463	15.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,135</b>	<b>20,341</b>	<b>19,124</b>	<b>19,337</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
<b>Fraser Valley Region</b>					
Kwantlen University College	8937	8867	8767	9026	3.0%
University College of the Fraser Valley	4800	5433	5641	5685	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,737</b>	<b>14,300</b>	<b>14,408</b>	<b>14,711</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>Vancouver Island Region</b>					
Camosun College	4813	4879	5009	4929	-1.6%
Malaspina University-College	4632	4177	3989	3653	-8.4%
North Island College	1166	1093	1068	1016	-4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,611</b>	<b>10,149</b>	<b>10,066</b>	<b>9,598</b>	<b>-4.6%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61,441</b>	<b>63,671</b>	<b>59,208</b>	<b>58,494</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>
<b>Grand Total Without BCIT</b>	<b>61,441</b>	<b>60,519</b>	<b>56,145</b>	<b>55,656</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>

<sup>4</sup> The data are totaled with and without BCIT due to the fact that there are no data on BCIT for 2003. Thus, to get a sense of three year trends, BCIT is removed from the Potential Transfer Student Total. Furthermore, BCIT has many Potential Transfer Students but contributes few Successful Transfer Students. Therefore, inclusion of BCIT can give a false impression of future transfer.

## Whereabouts of Potential Transfer Students – Those who Chose to Go to Another CDW Institution

- **Figure 6** provides data on the number of Potential Transfer Students (n= 3,431) that had attended a different CDW institution in 2006. Similar to 2005, BCIT had the largest number of students moving to BCIT from other CDW institutions. UCFV and Malaspina retain many of their Eligible Transfer Students rather than them transferring to a university. They also tend to attract relatively few Potential Transfer Students despite offering a large number of degrees.

**Figure 6: Fall 2006 CDW Students that Attended another CDW Institution in the Fall of 2005**



## Trends – Eligible Transfer Students down by 4.3% from 2005 to 2006

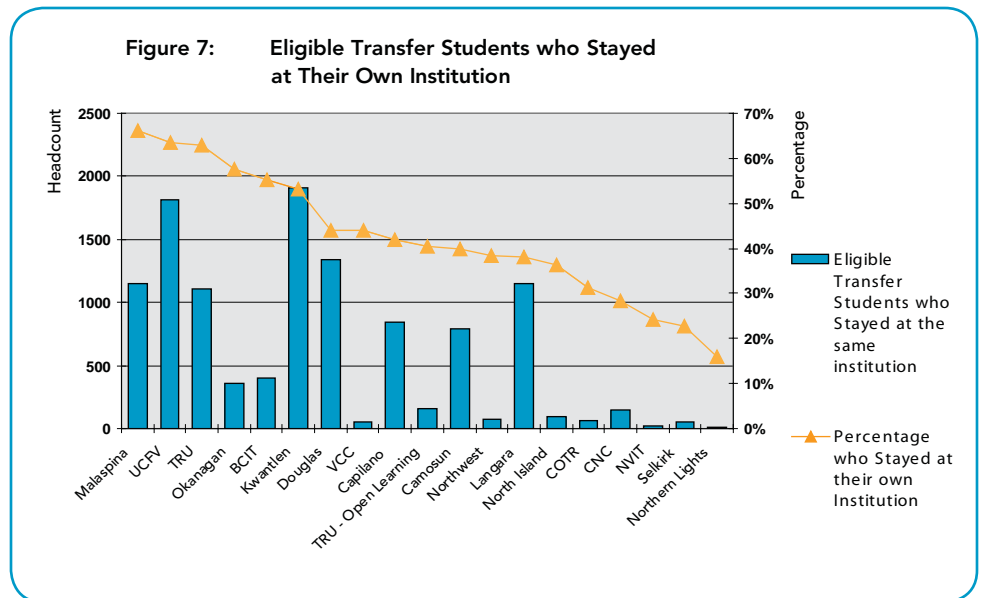
- **Table 4** shows that over 22,000 *Eligible Transfer Students* were enrolled at CDW institutions in the fall of 2006. An *Eligible Transfer Student* is a student who is enrolled in or has completed at least 24 credits in courses listed in the BC Transfer Guide and has a GPA of at least 2.0. For the most recent sending term (2006), the number of Eligible Transfer Students has declined by 4.3% over the previous sending term (2005). All regions, except the interior region, saw a decrease in the number of Eligible Transfer Students from 2005 to 2006. North Island, Selkirk and Okanagan saw the only increases, with Selkirk (20%) and Okanagan (59%) being substantial.

**Table 4: Trends - Eligible Transfer Students (Headcount)**

SENDING INSTITUTION	LAST KNOWN SENDING TERM (FALL)				2005 to 2006 % change
	2003	2004	2005	2006	
<b>Special Purpose Institutions</b>					
British Columbia Institute of Technology		755	724	617	-14.8%
Institute of Indigenous Government	12	32	37	n/a	
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	31	52	95	75	-21.1%
Open Learning Agency	367	398	--	--	--
Thompson Rivers U - Open Learning	--	--	389	262	-32.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>1,237</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>954</b>	<b>-23.4%</b>
<b>Total without Open Learning Agency</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>-19.2%</b>
<b>Northern Region</b>					
College of New Caledonia	477	478	519	428	-17.5%
Northern Lights College	130	98	81	67	-17.3%
Northwest Community College	180	188	180	168	-6.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>-15.0%</b>
<b>Interior Region</b>					
College of the Rockies	195	189	191	184	-3.7%
Okanagan University College	1,882	2,116	--	--	--
Okanagan College	--	--	628	999	59.1%
Selkirk College	281	240	236	283	19.9%
University College of the Cariboo	1,643	1,778	--	--	--
Thompson Rivers University	--	--	1,757	1,749	-0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,001</b>	<b>4,323</b>	<b>2,812</b>	<b>3,215</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
<b>Vancouver Region</b>					
Capilano College	2,053	2,146	2,003	1,816	-9.3%
Douglas College	3,014	3,182	3,038	3,013	-0.8%
Langara College	3,145	3,244	3,008	2,888	-4.0%
Vancouver Community College	95	104	118	118	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,307</b>	<b>8,676</b>	<b>8,167</b>	<b>7,835</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>
<b>Fraser Valley Region</b>					
Kwantlen University College	3,513	3,519	3,586	3,539	-1.3%
University College of the Fraser Valley	2,261	2,675	2,863	2,385	-16.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,774</b>	<b>6,194</b>	<b>6,449</b>	<b>5,924</b>	<b>-8.1%</b>
<b>Vancouver Island Region</b>					
Camosun College	1,799	1,991	1,972	1,954	-0.9%
Malaspina University-College	2,112	1,837	1,734	1,598	-7.8%
North Island College	316	278	266	271	1.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,227</b>	<b>4,106</b>	<b>3,972</b>	<b>3,823</b>	<b>-3.8%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>23,506</b>	<b>25,300</b>	<b>23,425</b>	<b>22,414</b>	<b>-4.3%</b>
<b>Grand Total Without BCIT</b>	<b>23,506</b>	<b>24,545</b>	<b>22,701</b>	<b>21,797</b>	<b>-4.0%</b>

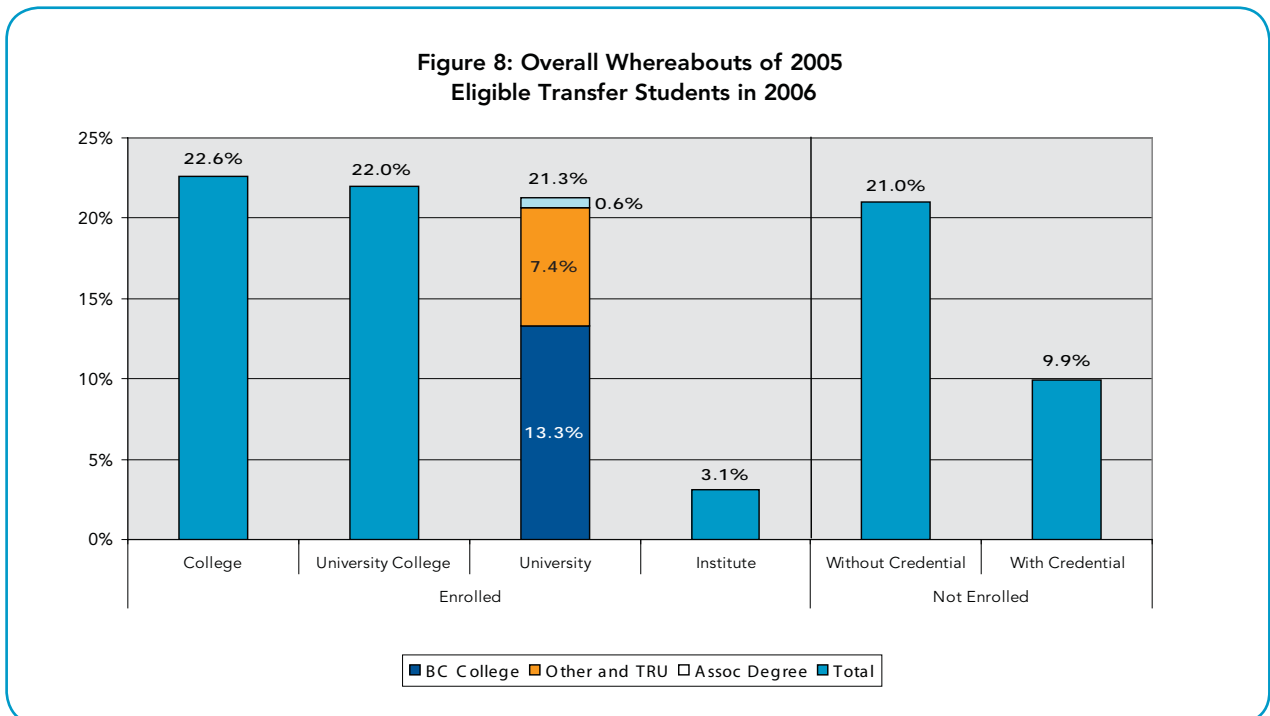
## Whereabouts of Eligible Transfer Students - Those who Chose to Stay at Their Own Institution

- **Figure 7** provides the numbers and percentages of 2005 Eligible Transfer Students that were studying at the same CDW institution in 2006. BCIT and the university colleges had the highest percentage of students who continued their studies at the same institution, likely as a result of their degree programs.



## Overall Whereabouts of Eligible Transfer Students

- **Figure 8** provides a breakdown of the whereabouts of 2005 Eligible Transfer Students (n = 23,425). The data show that 69% of the students are still enrolled in either a university or a CDW institution in 2006. A further 10% of students were not enrolled but had received a credential at a CDW institution. This leaves 21% of the students who are not enrolled and have not graduated. Some of the reasons why students have not shown up at a university or a CDW institution include:
  - » Some may have gone to private institutions or have left the province to pursue other avenues of post-secondary education; and
  - » Others may have chosen to stop out of education for a period of time.
- Thirteen percent of the Eligible Transfer Students were admitted to a university with BC College as the basis of admission and less than 1% were admitted based on receiving an Associate degree at a CDW institution. At this time, only SFU and UVic admit students based on Associate Degrees.
- The 7.4% of Eligible Transfer Students (Headcount = 1,742) who were admitted on a basis of admission other than BC College or Associate Degree includes 254 students who were admitted to a university with BC High School or Other as the basis of admission. The remaining students (1,488) were admitted to Thompson Rivers University - CDW (regular and open learning) with no basis of admission reported. This includes 1,263 students who were at TRU in the Fall of 2005 and were still registered at TRU in the Fall of 2006.





## Conclusions

The evidence presented in this summary as well as in the underlying data sent to institutions in early May 2007 suggest that there is a softening in the number of Potential Transfer Students (down 1.2%), Eligible Transfer Students (down 4.3%), and Successful Transfer Students (down 4.1%). However, the methodology used to identify possible transfer students is imprecise. Many factors can influence the numbers of transfer students, including expanded capacity in the system (25,000 new seats) and its impact on enrolment decisions, and the state of the economy. The number of Successful Transfer Students will be influenced by the GPA requirements at universities as well as enrolment management practices. Finally, the creation of additional degrees at the university colleges and colleges/institutes could reduce the number of students transferring to universities.

BCCAT continues to present and analyze student mobility data to help institutions with their enrolment planning. Working with the STP, BCCAT plans to continue research on transfer student mobility in 2007/08 as part of research on the overall flow of students among BC post-secondary institutions over a multi-year period.

## Project Background

Research on transfer student mobility began as part of BCCAT's Admissions Committee work plan but has evolved to become part of the Student Transitions Project (STP) work plan. This has occurred because the STP (a) provides an ideal mechanism for the systematic collection of data from the secondary and post-secondary systems, and (b) conforms to Freedom of Information regulations.

The present study was conducted under the auspices of the STP and was funded by BCCAT. The study was guided by the STP's Mobility of Transfer Students Subcommittee, whose members put significant time and effort into analyzing the research results and preparing this newsletter and the pivot tables. Membership includes:

- **Kathleen Bigsby**, Director, Institutional Analysis & Planning, Kwantlen University College;
- **Bob Cowin**, Director, Institutional Research & Planning, Douglas College;
- **Joanne Heslop**, Acting Director of Analytical Studies, Simon Fraser University;
- **Hugh Judd**, Data Warehouse Coordinator, Ministry of Advanced Education.

Each year, BC's universities face the challenging task of establishing the minimum grade point averages (GPAs) that they will use to meet enrolment targets. The GPA threshold that results in a particular level of enrolment one year can result in quite a different level the next because the number of applicants varies, as does the rate at which they accept offers of admission, and because of variations in the course load and retention rates of existing students

Universities use data from the Ministry of Education on enrolment levels and grade distributions by subject to determine enrolment quotas and GPAs for admitting Grade 12 students.

Data about the eligible pool of college, university college, and institute students seeking to transfer into second or third year university have been less robust. The establishment of the Central Data Warehouse (CDW) for colleges, university colleges, and institutes in BC has presented an opportunity to provide better information to universities for their admission decisions.

This research project on BC transfer student mobility began with the goal of providing accurate data about the pool of potential transfer students seeking admission to university. However, the research has also increased our understanding about flows among and retention rates within CDW institutions.

## Definitions & Conceptual Framework

The first step in this study was to define as broadly as possible the pool of students who might potentially transfer to university.

**A Potential Transfer Student is any student who is enrolled in or has completed at least one course listed in the BC Transfer Guide.**

The student's intentions or grades are immaterial for inclusion in the Potential Transfer Student group.

The second step was to determine what portion of the pool of Potential Transfer Students was likely to seek university admission in the near future by focusing on students who had enough courses and high enough grades to meet most universities' minimum entrance criteria for admission as transfer students.

**An Eligible Transfer Student is any student who is enrolled in or has completed at least 24 credits in courses listed in the BC Transfer Guide and has a GPA of at least 2.00.**

Not all of these "eligible" students would seek university admission in the following year, nor would they necessarily meet specific entrance requirements, but they represented the source of most of the transfer enrolment demand from 2005 that universities would experience in 2006.

The third and final step was to determine the proportions of the pools of *potential* and *eligible* students who actually entered university the subsequent year with transfer as the basis of admission.

**A Successful Transfer Student is any student who was admitted to university on the basis of having completed a minimum number of credits in courses in a college, university college, or institute that are transferable to BC universities.**

The number of Successful Transfer Students could then be compared with Eligible Transfer Students to calculate Transfer Ratios. By monitoring trends in the Transfer Ratios, along with trends in the numbers of potential and eligible transfer students, universities would be better able to forecast the transfer enrolment demand and hence to set appropriate GPA cut-offs for meeting enrolment quotas.

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