



BRIEFING NOTES

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Upcoming Events

May 24 - 26
CICan 2015 Conference
Winnipeg, MB

June 24 - 25
PCCAT2015 - Blending Borders:
Expanding Capacity and Access
through Student Transfer and
Mobility
Windsor, ON

An Update From CRSM: Some of our Preliminary Findings

On April 20-21, the Ontario Council of Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) hosted its fourth annual conference, "2015 Student Pathways in Higher Education." For us at CRSM, the conference offered an ideal audience of experts from which to obtain feedback on two of our ongoing ONCAT funded projects: *The Changing Patterns of College-to-University Transfer: Examination of the Graduate Satisfaction Survey since 2006-07* and *The Impact of Labour Market and Policy Changes on University Transfer: The Case Study of Early Childhood Education*.

The ONCAT conference attracted academic researchers and representatives from other provincial transfer agencies, including the BC and Alberta Councils on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT, ACAT). Presenters and attendees included college and university representatives such as registrars, coordinators, student advisors, students, and senior administrators as well as provincial agencies and associations.

Of particular interest were the two plenary sessions with the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities: Minister Reza Moridi outlined the Province of Ontario's agenda for postsecondary education; Paddy Buckley, acting ADM, presented Ontario's strategic plan for credit transfer. Highlights of CRSM's presentations are below. Full presentations available [HERE](#).



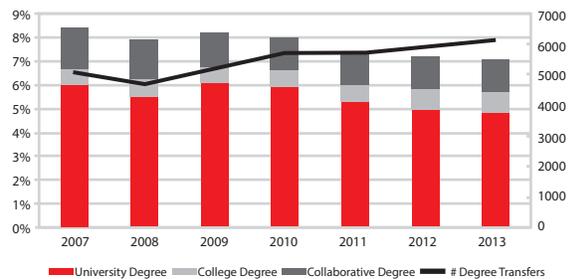
Key Findings from "The Changing Patterns of College-to-University Transfer: Examination of the Graduate Satisfaction Survey since 2006-07"

Trends in college-to-university transfers

Since 2006-07, the number of transfer agreements has grown – the provincial government has invested more money into the development of pathways, and institutions have increased initiatives to foster student mobility. The intervening years have shown a decline in the percentage of graduates pursuing a degree at a college or university. However, due to a large growth in college enrolment, this translates into a 21% increase in the total number (Figure 1). When examined closely, declines in transfer rates for students in two-year

diploma programs and for international students appear to be the most responsible for the overall trend.

Figure 1: Percentage and estimated number of college graduates furthering their education in a degree program, 2006-07 to 2012-13



Who transfers to university?

Younger college graduates from middle or high income neighbourhoods are somewhat more likely to transfer, with gender not having a significant impact. International graduates are also far less likely to transfer. Perhaps more importantly, program area and

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credential type are strongly linked to the propensity for transfer. Graduates from community service and preparatory programs, as well as those from three-year diploma programs, most commonly transferred.

The transfer experience: graduates entering a university degree program

Reasons for continuing: include career advancement; obtaining the credential; and expanding education, skills and training.

Information Sources: Transfer students report a high use of a variety of information sources, with university sources (either through staff, website or publications) the most common.

Program affinity: There are several indications that, since 2006-07, graduates are reporting increased affinity between their college and university programs. Graduates who transfer now are more likely to report that:

- their university program is very related to their college program (from 44% to 53%);
- they are receiving more than two years of credit;
- they are less interested in entering a different field of study; and
- for them, a transfer agreement is a reason for continuing.

Satisfaction: Satisfaction with academic preparation, the transition process, and their college education overall remains consistently high.

Key Findings from “The Impact of Labour Market and Policy Changes on University Transfer: The Case Study of Early Childhood Education”

Early childhood education is an area of interest as a large occupationally based program with a traditionally high transfer rate to university. It has, however, undergone significant changes in recent years, resulting in a reduction in the number of transfers. This study provides a provincial overview of ECE labour market and transfer trends, and includes a case study of Seneca’s ECE graduates.

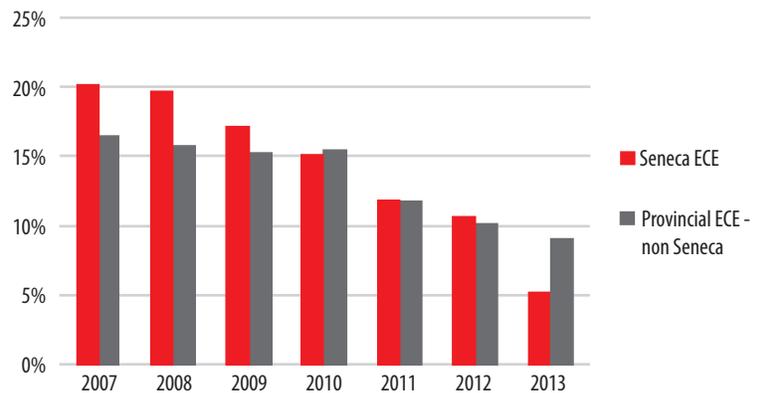
Improved labour market outcomes for ECE graduates

In 2007, the Ontario government passed legislation to regulate the early childhood education field, establishing the College of Early Childhood Educators (the College) in 2008. This was followed by the introduction of full-day kindergarten, increasing the demand for registered early childhood educators. Both of these changes likely improved the labour market outcomes for ECE graduates, making the prospect of furthering their education less desirable. As well, colleges introduced degree programs related to early childhood education in 2008, enabling students to choose this route rather than entering an ECE diploma and transferring credits to a university degree program.

Fewer ECE college graduates are continuing on to university

Provincially, the percentage of ECE graduates continuing on to university within six months has dropped from 17% in 2007 to 9% in 2013 (Figure 2). In the same time frame, salaries for ECE graduates have increased by 16% compared to only 4% for non-ECE graduates. Employment for ECE graduates has traditionally been strong and continues to remain so, with an unemployment rate for recent graduates of 8% in 2013, approximately half that of non-ECE graduates.

Figure 2: Percentage of ECE graduates who attend university 6 months after graduation



Our analysis of ECE transfer at Seneca affirms these findings. We found that even when controlling for socio-demographic and academic factors, the number of transfers has dropped significantly for Seneca’s ECE graduates since 2009, relative to 2007-2009 graduates. The decrease in transfer coincided with the changes, as described above, that the ECE profession underwent in the late 2000s. Job prospects have since improved, the profession has attracted older students who have previously attended university, and interest in transfer to university by entering students has decreased. Additionally, the introduction of related college degree programs has provided an alternate route to a degree, contributing to the decrease in transfer to university.

Next steps in our research include the following:

- Add the current year of graduates to our dataset.
- Incorporate labour market program/ regional trends.
- Obtain feedback and discuss findings with ECE professionals and education providers.
- Conduct a similar analysis on a non-occupation based program, General Arts and Science.
- Conduct a more in-depth analysis of mature, first generation and international students, using the Seneca-wide dataset.
- Explore potential partnerships with other institutions to share data and research capacity.