



Transfer patterns of Seneca's business students: Student profile and academic success at Toronto universities

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PURPOSE

Seneca College has had long-standing partnerships with its neighbouring universities, Ryerson and York, with a particular emphasis on transfer between Faculties of Business. This study, using administrative databases, tracked the mobility patterns of Seneca's business students who transferred between Seneca, York or Ryerson, in either direction, during the years 2012 to 2017.

KEY FINDINGS

Of the 24,610 students enrolled in a Seneca business program between 2012 and 2017, approximately 11% attended either York or Ryerson between 2006-07 and 2017-18. Only 32% of students entering a Seneca business program from York or Ryerson had graduated pre-transfer, whereas 78% of Seneca business students who transferred to York or Ryerson had graduated pre-transfer. University graduates entering Seneca primarily enrolled in graduate certificate programs (87%), whereas those who did not complete their university degree entered a range of credentials at Seneca, with 18% choosing a college degree. Of Seneca students continuing on to York or Ryerson, an overwhelming share entered business or related programs (82% at York, 95% at Ryerson), whereas university students entering Seneca came from various university programs.

Two years after transfer, 23% of those who transferred from York or Ryerson to a Seneca business program had withdrawn, whereas 49% had graduated. For the reverse direction, 26% of those who transferred from Seneca to York or Ryerson had withdrawn within two years, and 27% had graduated. Overall, combining graduates and non-graduates, 43% of students who transferred from college to university obtained a grade average of B or above at their receiving institution. Among students who transferred from university to college, 56% obtained a grade average of B or above at Seneca. Students who graduated before transferring performed better after transfer, with the effect far more pronounced for the university-to- Seneca pathways.

Results showed that key drivers of student success (GPA and retention) post-transfer include a student's GPA prior to transfer and math assessment scores at Seneca entry, regardless of

pathway (university to college or college to university). For Seneca students transferring to York or Ryerson, two-year graduation rates post-transfer are strongly related to the transfer pathways available at the receiving university.

Overall, the results suggest there are two populations of students taking the university-to-Seneca business pathway: (1) those who did poorly in university and did not graduate and are seeking a second chance at a post-secondary credential and 2) successful university graduates who choose one-year graduate certificates with specialized training to prepare them for the labour market. However, Seneca business students taking the college to university pathway are primarily academically strong students who are continuing in business by laddering their Seneca diploma to a university degree. Ultimately, the study findings can be used both to inform existing transfer agreements and to help support transfer students.