

ARUCC

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> THIRD ANNUAL GRONINGEN DECLARATION MEETING: PROMOTING THE ELECTRONIC EXCHANGE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DATA



KATHLEEN MASSEY, REGISTRAR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENROLMENT SERVICES, MCGILL UNIVERSITY

BILL MCKEE, DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC INNOVATION, OCAS APPLICATION SERVICES INC.

The purpose of the Groningen Declaration is to support the international mobility of people, promoting education and economic development worldwide by exchanging postsecondary data electronically. Signed by organizations associated with international educational data exchange, the Declaration was created at the founding seminar in 2012 in Groningen, Netherlands, with the goal to:

“...make Digital Student Data Portability happen. Citizens world wide should be able to consult and share their authentic educational data with whom-ever they want, whenever they want, wherever.”

Bill McKee (representing Ontario Colleges Application Service and Canadian Post-Secondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) Users Group) and Kathleen Massey (representing McGill University) attended the 3rd Annual meeting of the Groningen Declaration group from April 7 to April 9, 2014 at Georgetown University in Washington DC. As the Declaration is focused on enhancing student mobility on an international level, attendees represented organizations from across the globe, primarily members of government, public and not-for-profit organizations that have experience as centralized registry or aggregation services (e.g. National Student Clearing Warehouse in the USA). The goal for the 2014 meeting was to seek common ground in best serving the academic and professional mobility needs of citizens worldwide. The event included presentations from a variety of organizations that concern themselves with educational and career data gathering and sharing.

Some of the themes that emerged throughout the conference included the elimination of paper as a means of sharing education data, recognition of the

digital student record as being much more enabling than the traditional student transcript, a strong emphasis on data security, respect for student privacy and jurisdictional privacy law, and trust. Other themes that were discussed included finding opportunities for collaboration and convergence rather than imposing specific standards (although the value of standards is understood to be beneficial). The North American presenters promoted the value of PESC standards.

What changes are underway internationally? There are now a number of pilot projects that are resulting in the international exchange of student data via centralized trusted registry services and/or aggregating services. One example is a pilot project between the China Higher Education Student Information and Career Center (CHESICC), US CollegeNet, and the US National Student Clearinghouse. In this project, postsecondary transcript data will be transmitted electronically directly from China (via CHESICC) to the US, where universities will receive the data for graduate admission purposes.

Other initiatives include a move away from paper-oriented data sharing to a digital vision that promotes convergence of data format standards (e.g. PESC, EDI, PESC-standard PDF, etc.).

Next steps include discussing a national approach to data-sharing in an international context that leverages existing excellent Canadian work on intra- and inter-provincial data-sharing. Bill and Kathleen will be hosting a discussion at the ARUCC conference in June to start this national conversation.

> UPDATE ON THE SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS PROJECT

DR. TRICIA SEIFERT, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP, HIGHER & ADULT EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Editor's note: One of ARUCC's objectives is to support research, policy studies and other investigations into the practice and management of registrarial administration. One such initiative is the "Supporting Student Success" project, headed by Dr. Tricia Seifert at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Dr. Seifert will be presenting her findings at the upcoming ARUCC conference in Quebec City from June 15 - 18; here is a preview:

"Student success" is one of the most commonly used phrases in higher education. Although the phrase often connotes a multi-faceted perspective of "success" that varies by individual, persisting to graduation is the most commonly held component used to define "student success". Provincial governments across the country are calling for "value for money" while the public demands postsecondary graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the needs of a changing work place. In each case, supporting students through completion of their postsecondary education is essential for realizing students' and the public's investment.

With an emphasis on persistence to completion, a host of programs and services exist at postsecondary institutions to support the increasingly diverse student body in attaining their educational goals. Most of the retention literature focuses on the relationship between student actions and their persistence. For example, students who feel connected to their institution and a strong sense of belonging are more likely to persist than students who report feeling disconnected from their institution. This literature has been extremely important in suggesting how student involvement, engagement and integration are associated with student persistence. Yet, this body of research focuses almost exclusively on the actions taken by students.

Despite increased efforts to better support student success in recent decades (academic learning skills centres, intensive academic advising, and early alert systems), little research

has examined the role of organizational attributes in student persistence and its corollary, retention. Specifically, what role does staff and faculty awareness about their campus' support structures or their perceptions of their campus' culture in terms of *supporting student success* predict actual student persistence and graduation? There is much to explore in understanding the relationships between features of the internal institutional context and student success.

The purpose of the third phase of the *Supporting Student Success* study is to correlate organizational attributes (reporting structure, available support programs and services), measures of staff and faculty members' awareness of and engagement with institutional efforts to support student success, as well as their perception of their campus culture with institutional records of student year-to-year persistence and graduation.

In the current phase of the study, the research team has used institutional documents as well as interview and focus group data to develop surveys which measure respondents' knowledge of campus programs and services that support student success; the degree to which respondents have engaged with these programs and services (ranging from making referrals to participating actively in an ongoing collaboration with these programs and service areas); and respondents' perception of campus efforts at the departmental and institutional level to support student retention and credential completion. The research team will use

these survey data from staff, faculty and senior administrative leaders to investigate the relationship between institutional factors, student characteristics and postsecondary success.

Although a stronger Canada begins with increased postsecondary access and participation, its strength is fully realized when postsecondary students complete the academic goal they pursued from the outset, leading to enhanced contribution to the civic and economic innovation and growth of their communities.

In summer and fall 2013, institutions from across Canada were recruited to participate in the first year of the survey data collection. To date, two colleges and five universities from Ontario (including one Francophone campus), two universities from British Columbia, one university from Quebec, and one Francophone university from New Brunswick have participated in the study. Nearly 2,700 faculty, staff and senior administrative leaders from these institutions began the survey. The research team is in the process of cleaning and coding the institutional files. Institutional reports will be disseminated to participating institutions in October 2014.

The study will be recruiting additional institutions from across Canada to participate in the Winter 2015 survey administration. If your institution is interesting in learning more about the *Supporting Student Success* study and participating in 2015, please email:

Tricia.Seifert@utoronto.ca.

You can also learn more about the study at: www.supportingstudentsuccess.wordpress.com.



> ACADEMICS WITHOUT BORDERS CANADA

SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

DR. STEVEN DAVIS

PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF PHILOSOPHY AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY AND CARLETON UNIVERSITY AND ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITÉ DU MONTRÉAL.

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Good universities are crucial to a nation's advancement, and this is especially true in the world's least developed countries. Higher education provides citizens with the skills and knowledge needed to become productive citizens, competent professionals, and successful entrepreneurs; and university research generates the knowledge needed to solve social problems, stimulate technological advancements, and drive economic development.

However, good universities do not emerge overnight. They are complex institutions whose capacity must be developed and nurtured carefully over time. Many countries lack the resources to achieve this. So some send their students abroad for higher education, but this often backfires through "brain drain." Their youth remain overseas and their home countries derive no benefit from their education.

Enter Academics Without Borders Canada (AWBC), a bi-lingual non-governmental organization, established in 2007. Its mission is to support developing countries improve their universities so that they can educate at home the professionals these countries need for their development. AWBC works through academic experts, many of them Canadian, although academics from several other countries have participated. These experts volunteer their time to work on projects with their colleagues in developing countries to help establish and improve the quality of sustainable programs and services. The projects have focused on a number of areas, including, health, teach-



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GUDRUN CURRIE



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ing and learning methodology, various academic disciplines, student services, and back-office operations, as well as preparing strategic plans and overhauling organizational structures.

A recent example that is apt during this 20th anniversary of Rwanda's tragic genocide is the engagement of Robin Farquhar, Carleton's former president, who is also a University of Winnipeg president emeritus. He served for five months as a strategic adviser to the Rwandan ministry of education in restructuring the country's higher education system. Along with Anthony Morgan, a former vice president at the University of Utah, Farquhar developed a plan for implementing the Rwandan's government's decision to merge its seven higher education institutions into a single national university, the University of Rwanda, with comprehensive offerings, several campuses and quality programs, while keeping costs within reach of the Rwandan budget.

Other projects that AWBC has undertaken to develop higher education in Rwanda include Carol Dence, who held administrative and faculty positions at Carleton and the University of Ottawa, and Gudrun Currie's work to assist the National University of Rwanda to upgrade its registrar's office, Don Cherry's to help the University establish a Master's degree in accounting, and Corrie Young's to aid some of the staff at the University to improve their administrative skills.

Since 2009, AWBC has done 50 projects in 14 countries and is practically the only non-governmental organization worldwide to assist developing countries improve their universities. It is currently helping set up an Academics without Borders in the U.S., is working with Universitaires sans frontières in France, is exploring creating AWBs in other countries and is considering establishing an AWB International.

> ARUCC ONLINE ARCHIVE OF LIST-SERV SURVEYS

See if this sounds familiar: you are at work, debating an issue with your colleagues. Someone wonders how other institutions deal with the same issue. At that point, you get a vague recollection of seeing a survey posted on the ARUCC list-serv a little while ago, addressing the very same topic. You check your email inbox, but you can't find it. You check your ARUCC email archive, but again, the survey results are nowhere to be found...

For many ARUCC members, list-serv surveys are a terrific way to get a quick picture of how things are done at universities, colleges and institutes across Canada. But many ARUCC members may not be aware that all list-serv surveys are archived on the [ARUCC website](#). Next time you visit the ARUCC website, click on [ARUCC surveys](#) in the left hand navigation menu. You'll see a categorical listing of survey topics areas (e.g. "Academic Scheduling", "Admissions and Transfer", etc.). Click on a topic for a listing of all historical surveys dating back to 2005 within that topic area. Recent surveys (2014) include: *Course Waitlist Survey*, *Admission Application Fees*, *Fall Examination Survey*, and *Official Document Fees Survey*.



> AACRAO SPEEDE

COMMITTEE UPDATE

DOUG HOLMES, ARUCC REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AACRAO SPEEDE COMMITTEE AND TO THE CANADIAN PESC USER GROUP

Since the Fall 2013 issue of CONTACT, SPEEDE and CPUG have attended and presented on educational EDX standards and data exchange at the [AACRAO 2014 Annual Meeting](#) and the [PESC Spring 2014 Data Summit](#). SPEEDE and CPUG will be attending and presenting at the following upcoming events and we'd love to see you there: the [ARUCC 2014 Conference](#); the [AACRAO 2014 Technology Conference](#); the [RMACRAO Annual Meeting 2014](#); and the [PESC Fall 2014 Data Summit](#).

CPUG members continue work on initiatives to promote and advance the cross-Canada exchange of electronic transcripts using PESC's XML formats:

- BCcampus reports six institutions are currently trading transcripts in PESC XML. BCcampus continues working with the other universities and colleges in BC to add them as exchange partners.
- ApplyAlberta and the OCAS are drafting a document entitled *Recommended Implementation Practices for the PESC XML High School Transcript in Canada*, intended to complement PESC's existing guide for the Canadian education audience.
- Since September 2013, the OUAC has received several thousand PESC XML High School transcripts from Ontario high schools for non-direct entry applicants via a centralized system at OCAS. In turn, the OUAC responds with the PESC XML Transcript Acknowledgement and then securely forwards the transcripts as PDF to the Ontario universities to which the students have applied.
- The OUAC and BCcampus have begun their joint project to exchange PESC XML College Transcripts between the Ontario universities and British Columbia postsecondary institutions via web services. Phase 1 launched in January 2014, with Douglas College sending PESC XML postsecondary transcripts to the Ontario university sector and receiving PESC XML acknowledgements in return. Subsequent phases are planned for additional BC institutions sending to Ontario and Ontario universities sending to BC.
- The OUAC has completed testing its implementation of the XML-to-EDI and EDI-to-XML crosswalks for each of the Transcript Request, Response, Transcript, Acknowledgement and Functional Acknowledgement. Algoma University will begin sending PESC XML transcripts in spring 2014, which the OUAC will automatically convert to EDI before re-routing to the other exchange partners as well as converting those partners' data to XML for return to Algoma.
- Similarly, the electronic transcript hub at OCAS has begun receiving PESC XML transcripts from both Centennial College and Canadore College, which its system converts to and from EDI to exchange with all other colleges in Ontario.
- The OUAC and OCAS hubs continue to exchange EDI-formatted transcripts, allowing transcript data to flow across both university and college sectors within Ontario.
- Institutions in Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are at various stages of designing systems to allow the flow of PESC XML high school transcripts to each province's postsecondary institutions, with hopes to eventually allow those transcripts to also flow interprovincially.

There have also been a number of developments regarding electronic transcript exchange among various organizations and student information systems products. In early 2014, Ellucian and the National Student Clearinghouse announced their transcript request and PDF transcript exchange API's as part of baseline Banner, Colleague and PowerCampus systems. Parchment, along with AACRAO and NACUBO, is sponsoring a survey to revise a 1997 document on eTranscript return on investment originally published by the SPEEDE Committee; results are hoped to be available mid-2014. And several eTranscript vendors are adding functionality to their existing PDF exchange networks to allow schools to also send and receive EDI and XML data files.

If you have any SPEEDE, PESC or CPUG related questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Doug Holmes via email at: holmes@ouac.on.ca.

A REVIEW OF SOME OF THE ACRONYMS AND ORGANIZATIONS OFTEN REFERENCED WHEN DISCUSSING ELECTRONIC DATA EXCHANGE IN CANADA:

AACRAO

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

BCCAMPUS

British Columbia postsecondary agency providing a variety of services, including Transcripts BC for BC electronic transcript exchange.

EDI

Electronic Data Interchange (delimited file-based data exchange; standards for EDI are maintained and approved by PESC).

OCAS

Ontario College Application Service (centralized college admission application processing centre providing, among other services, the hub for Ontario college electronic transcript exchange).

PESC

P20W Education Standards Council (North American higher education standards body for EDI, XML and PDF; supports collaboration between institutions, organizations, vendors, governments, and others).

XML

eXtensible Markup Language (tagged file-based language akin to HTML; standards for XML-based data exchange are maintained and approved by PESC).

APPLYALBERTA

Alberta postsecondary agency providing, among other services, the transfer of Alberta electronic transcripts.

CPUG

SC User Group (a volunteer group of PESC members, working to ensure Canadian higher education interests are incorporated into PESC's standards).

EDX

Electronic Data eXchange (umbrella term covering all of EDI, XML and PDF exchanges).

OUAC

Ontario Universities' Application Centre (centralized university admission application processing centre providing, among other services, the hub for Ontario university electronic transcript exchange)

SPEEDE

Standardization of Postsecondary Education Electronic Data Exchange (an AACRAO committee which educates and facilitates expanding the adoption of electronic records exchange in the North American higher education sector).

> ARUCC AND PCCAT JUNE CONFERENCES

JUNE 15TH– 19TH

The ARUCC Bi-Annual Conference and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer Conference are both coming up quick. Plan to be in beautiful Quebec City June 15th – 19th to participate in both events. Each offers a rich program of outstanding plenary presentations and concurrent workshops. Keynote speakers include Chantal Hébert, Toronto Star columnist, CBC and Radio-Canada panelist and author and Dr Tricia Seifert, Assistant Professor, Department of Leadership, Higher & Adult Education, University of Toronto.

FOR REGISTRATION AND ACCOMMODATION DETAILS, VISIT THE [ARUCC](#) AND [PCCAT](#) CONFERENCE WEBSITES.

> ARUCC BIENNIAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA

8:00 AM
JUNE 17TH, 2014
QUEBEC CITY, QC

1. Call to order
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of minutes of the 30th Biennial General Meeting, Ottawa, ON, June 27th, 2012
4. President's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Presentation of Honorary Members
7. Presentation of ARUCC Outstanding Achievement Award
8. Nomination report
9. Elections
10. New business
11. Closing remarks
12. ARUCC 2016 conference announcement
13. Adjournment

> ONLINE RESOURCES FOR TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSCRIPT EVALUATION

JOANNE DUKLAS

A national ARUCC / PCCAT Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Study will soon be launching. It is a compendium of results from a national survey of current practices conducted in the winter of 2014. The goal of this study is to establish the groundwork for the updating of the 2003 ARUCC Transcript Guide and the creation of a national searchable transfer credit glossary.

A number of resources currently exist [online](#) to assist with transcript assessment; these include:

- **2014 ARUCC ACADEMIC CALENDAR STUDY ON SESSIONAL DATES**
(newly released in March 2014).
This report summarizes the findings from a national study of sessional date scheduling practices at colleges, universities and institutes across Canada.
- **2003 ARUCC TRANSCRIPT GUIDE**
This resource provides detailed guidance on transcript components and a summary of considerations to assist registrarial operations.

- **MCGILL CGPA CALCULATION**

A password protected site for members only, this online tool will assist practitioners in admissions operations with comparing grade equivalencies from different jurisdictions available both nationally and internationally.

- **QUEBEC REGISTRARS GUIDE, PRACTICES AND PRIORITIES**

While created for Quebec postsecondary institutions, this guide contains a number of best practices that are applicable to other jurisdictions and that cover the range of activities typical within registrarial operations. Topics discovered include recruitment, admissions, enrolment management, transfer credit equivalencies, prior learning recognition, course scheduling, student record management, credential verification, reporting, and more.

Other resources:

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), a partner organization of ARUCC, offers numerous resources for purchase including a 2011 AACRAO Transcript Guide and an online searchable database of transfer credit practices of thousands of US postsecondary institutions. Further details are available at www.aacrao.org.

> UPDATE FROM THE ARUCC EXECUTIVE TABLE

In early April 2014, the ARUCC Executive met in Quebec City; here's a snapshot of what was discussed at the ARUCC table:

- **ARUCC/PCCAT Transcript Project.** ARUCC is working with Joanne Duklas, former President of ARUCC, on a project designed to survey and describe best practices in post-secondary transcription across Canada (see item *Online Resources for Transcription and Transcript Evaluation* in this newsletter for more information).
- **Supporting Student Success Project.** ARUCC is also working with Dr. Tricia Seifert from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto on a research project that looks at the relationship between post-secondary institution organizational structure and student success (see item *Update on the Supporting Student Success Project* in this newsletter for more information).
- **Website Re-Development.** The [ARUCC website](#) is one of the primary means of communication among ARUCC members. Unfortunately, the technical structure of the website has become a little out of date and difficult to update. The Executive discussed desired functionality in a new web site (such as greater tie-ins with social media and better vehicles for two-way communication with members) and various approaches to contracting with a third party to re-develop the website.
- **Conference Planning.** In addition to discussing various aspects of the upcoming Bi-Annual Conference in Quebec City, the Executive toured the facility (which is brand new and looks great!) in order to better plan for logistics.
- **Elections, Awards and Preparation for the Biannual General Meeting.** More specifically, the Executive discussed plans for transition to a new Executive in June 2014.

