Consultation Brief

About the ARUCC Research Working Group

The ARUCC Research Working Group is a volunteer committee primarily focused on responding to research requests to the national association, reviewing research documents, providing recommendations to the executive, and identifying research opportunities. It is not a decision making body; rather, it provides a collegial working venue for those interested ARUCC members who volunteer their time to help support research projects of interest to the membership and the ARUCC executive.

Introduction to the Research Templates

To facilitate the creation of topic-specific synopses of research for the ARUCC community, the Committee has developed a templated approach which is intended to standardize the submission format for each of the items covered. Each synopsis is expected to be approximately two pages in length, available for publication on the ARUCC website, and created and updated by volunteer members of the ARUCC community. The ARUCC Research Working Group members will be creating the first set of briefs. The purpose will be to provide members with a snapshot of issue-specific research as a means to expedite membership access to current and relevant information. The approach is unique in that it provides a compendium of material that can be easily customized to the needs of enrolment services professionals.

Note: all briefs are required to follow the APA referencing style when citing other scholarly work. Further, documented permission of the original author is required if the material represents unpublished work or is attributed to a particular individual.

Template 1: to be used for topics that deal with strategic issues and incorporate scholarly research

1. Identify a topic
2. Identify the author of the brief and the date of preparation (in case there are additional questions, changes, or additions)
3. Provide an overview of the topic
4. Identify current research articles (provincial, national, international)
5. Highlight the details available from a particular Canadian study (if available) on the topic
6. Highlight any former ARUCC studies on the topic
7. Provide a summary of additional resources (if applicable)

Sample topics –

- SEM planning strategies
- Space utilization trends
- Performance based budgeting strategies
- Organizational structures in postsecondary education
- Student mobility trends
- Policy and institutional funding strategies
- Enrolment and retention trends
- Cost reduction and revenue enhancement strategies

- Program prioritization
- Competency-based education and learning outcomes
- Examining and benchmarking the roles in the enrolment services industry

Template 2: to be used for operational and implementation issues that may also include information about studies completed either within or outside of Canada

1. Identify a topic
2. Identify the author of the brief and the date of preparation (in case there are additional questions, changes, or additions)
3. Provide a summary of the topic or challenge to be solved
4. Identify any relevant literature or surveys (informal or formal) and provided relevant links to further information
5. Provides suggestions for operational or implementation principles along with pros and cons
6. Identify best or promising practices
7. Identify known exemplar(s)

Sample topics –

- Implementing online education
- Social media marketing techniques
- Paper vs electronic transcript practices
- Academic scheduling topics e.g., exploring the value of fall breaks towards enhancing student engagement
- CRM best practice techniques
- Scholarship packaging tactics
- Identifying transfer pathway exemplars
- Identifying student success exemplars in Canada

Example of Template 1:

Brief Synopsis – Topic: Documenting learner achievement of learning outcomes

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Date: June 2015

New forms of learning and credentialing are emerging in Canada.[1] The growing focus on learning outcomes[2] and competency-based learning and assessment,[3] has significant implications for documenting learner achievement. Given the growing focus on inter-institutional partnerships, transfer, and mechanisms for monitoring and representing student workload in a manner that facilitates transfer between institutions and through levels of education, institutions are examining alternate approaches to document achievement of learning outcomes.

Internationally, organizations such as the Lumina Foundation and OECD are exploring enhanced assessment metrics for learning outcomes even at the individual student level. Some references are provided for those that are interested in delving into this topic further:

- Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile – see http://www.luminafoundation.org/resources/dqp and http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/2013/November-December%202013/Degree_full.html
- What Degrees Should Mean, Inside Higher Ed - see https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/01/25/defining_what_a_college_degree_recipient_should_know_and_be_able_to_do
- Council for Aid to Education (CAE) – see "CLA +" at http://cae.org/participating-institutions/cla-overview
- OECD Assessment for Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) – see http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/testingstudentanduniversityperformancegloballyoecdsahelo.htm
- Profit and Competency, Inside Higher Ed – see https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/05/05/profit-kaplan-university-expands-its-competency-based-offerings-new-transcript

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[1] Carey, K. (January 22, 2013). MIT Mints a Valuable New Form of Academic Currency. Washington, D.C.: Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 26, 2015 from http://chronicle.com/article/MIT-Mints-a-Valuable-New-Form/130410/

[2] Lennon, M. C., Frank, B., Humphreys, J., Lenton, R., Madsen, K., Omri, A., & Turner, R.1 (2014). Tuning: Identifying and Measuring Sector-Based Learning Outcomes in Postsecondary Education. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

[3] Fitzgibbon, J. (February, 2014). Learning Outcomes and Credit Transfer: Examples, Issues, and Possibilities. Vancouver: British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT). http://bccat.ca/pubs/Learning_Outcomes_and_Credit_Transfer_Feb2014.pdf

Goff, L., Potter, M., Pierre, E., Carey, T., Gullage, A., Kustra, E., Lee, R., Lopes, V., Marshall, L., Martin, L., Raffoul, J., Siddiqui, A., Van Goestel, G. (2015). Learning Outcome's Assessment: A Practitioner's Handbook. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

- Competency-based Transcripts – see
  https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/09/northern-arizona-universitys-new-competency-based-degrees-and-transcripts
- Sample competency report – see
  https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/Competency%20Transcript%20Draft%20v12.pdf
- Credit without Teaching, Inside Higher Ed, Additional examples – see
  https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/04/22/competency-based-educations-newest-form-creates-promise-and-questions

Research and related efforts are underway in Canada to deliver learning in alternative ways and in a manner that acknowledges achievement of learning outcomes through a variety of learner experiences. One value of these projects is to further the exploration of the possibilities for transfer and student mobility. The following represent three recent Canadian examples:

- Fitzgibbon, J. (February, 2014). Learning Outcomes and Credit Transfer: Examples, Issues and Possibilities. Vancouver: BCCAT.
  http://bccat.ca/pubs/Learning_Outcomes_and_Credit_Transfer_Feb2014.pdf
- Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) – see http://www.heqco.ca/en-ca/Research/LearningOutcomes/Pages/home.aspx
- Lennon, M. C., Frank, B., Humphreys, J., Lenton, R., Madsen, K., Omri, A., & Turner, R.1 (2014). Tuning: Identifying and Measuring Sector-Based Learning Outcomes in Postsecondary Education. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.
  http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Tuning%20ENG.pdf

The Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) is also engaged in work on learning outcomes, particularly their use as a tool for building credit transfer and pathway opportunities for students. ONCAT is currently funding four learning outcomes focused pathway initiatives and has a forthcoming paper on learning outcomes for enhancing student mobility.

For the Tuning study mentioned above, the researchers identified and measured learning outcomes in specific postsecondary areas for four types of qualifications: two-year diploma, three-year diploma, a four-year baccalaureate, and a master's degree (research-based) (Lennon et al, 2014, p. 3).[4] The researchers further "affiliated" learning outcomes to Ontario qualification frameworks and degree level expectations (p. 3; appendices). The research project is quite extensive and provides practical advice to academic colleagues for incorporating learning outcomes in programs in meaningful ways. In the section, *Demonstrating Learning Outcomes to Students and Employers*, the researchers note the variety of methods institutions use around the world to provide documentation outlining student achievement of learning (p. 35). According to these authors, the examples include the European Diploma Supplement which also documents "'information on the Contents and Results Gained' broken down into four

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[4] Lennon, M. C., Frank, B., Humphreys, J., Lenton, R., Madsen, K., Omri, A., & Turner, R.1 (2014). Tuning: Identifying and Measuring Sector-Based Learning Outcomes in Postsecondary Education. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

categories: knowledge and understanding, intellectual (thinking) skills, practical skills (subject-specific) and key skills" (p. 35).[5]

The ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Study published in June 2014 outlines three specific international examples where learner achievements are documented differently than the approach taken in Canada: European Diploma Supplement (Duklas et al, 2014, p. 51), the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS) (p. 49), and the UK Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) (p. 53). The study is available at the following website:

ARUCC PCCAT Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Study: An examination of current practices at Canadian institutions.
http://www.arucc.ca/uploads/documents/arucc_pccat_15_jun_2014_english.pdf

Example of Template 2:

Brief Synopsis – Topic: Course Wait Listing

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Course wait listing is a functionality delivered with many Student Information Systems that can greatly enhance the student experience as well as make lives easier for Advisors and Registrarial staff. As with most system enhancements, there are lots of technical and business process issues to work through before implementing this substantial system change.

Wait listing is the process by which students can put themselves in a queued list to gain access to a course that is full. In the absence of wait listing, students are required to either seek approval to be signed in to a full course by the instructor or department. Or worse, wait for another student to drop a course and be the first person to add themselves in to it electronically – a very random process. In this environment, it is not surprising that enterprising students write their own programs to continuously submit add requests to a system, also known as "enrolbots". These programs can cripple a Student Information System during courses selection and drop & add periods by overloading servers.

The following are a list of questions and considerations for implementing wait listing.

1. How many students can be put on the list?
2. Do students still have to meet pre-requisites and other filters?
3. Is there a limit as to how many courses a student can wait list?
4. Are students automatically added to the course or notified to add it when a spot comes open?
5. If automatically added, are there issues with students who claim they did not know they were registered?
6. How are students notified about the opening if they must add it?

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[5] See European Commission for more details and the Phase 1 ARUCC PCCAT report noted above.

7. How long do students have to add the course once it opens if they must add it?
8. How do you handle cross-listed courses?
9. How do you handle courses that also have reserves placed on them?
10. Are there issues with lab/seminar/tutorials being separated from lectures?
11. How do you handle Instructors who insist on signing students in ahead of the wait list?
12. How do you communicate the intricacies of wait listing to your students?

The following surveys have been conducted on wait listing that provide valuable information on common and best practices.

http://www.arucc.ca/uploads/PDF/2014CourseWaitListSurveyResponses.xlsb

The following universities appear to have good approaches to wait listing their courses

Carleton University (Banner)

http://carleton.ca/registrar/registration/access-courses/waitlisting/

Simon Fraser University (Oracle)

https://www.sfu.ca/students/enrollment/enroll.html

Nova Scotia College of Art & Design (Colleague)

http://nscad.ca/en/home/studentresources/registration/default.aspx