

FULL PROGRAM

Key Issues in Ontario Higher Education: A Policy Research Symposium

Location: Ground Floor Library Space
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto
252 Bloor Street West

Date: Thursday, May 16th

Time: 9:30 to 3:30

9:30-10:00 **Welcome and Introduction**
Glen Jones (University of Toronto)
Chris Monahan (MTCU)

10:00-11:20 **Panel 1: Credit Transfer and Student Mobility: Research and Policy Implications**

Chair: Stacey Young (Ontario Council on Transfer and Articulation)

Sam Andrey & Jennifer Da Silva (MTCU)

Life After High School

ABSTRACT: Life After High School is a pilot project developed by MTCU and the Ministry of Education that began in participating high schools in Fall 2011. The project explores ways to increase the rate of transition to postsecondary education in Ontario by removing some barriers to participation. The project is managed, delivered, and evaluated by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC-www.srdc.org), along with Professor Phil Oreopoulos of the University of Toronto. SRDC and Prof. Oreopoulos have also been conducting a similar project in British Columbia high schools. The project provides students in select high schools with a program that, a) provides information on labour market opportunities and the economic benefits of postsecondary education, choices, and costs, and b) guides students through the PSE and Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) application processes. In 2011-12, the program was piloted in 87 high schools with low rates of transition to PSE. The schools were randomly divided into subject and control groups with 44 high schools and approximately 7,500 students receiving the program. Final results of the study (anonymous with respect to the schools) will be available in 2015. However, overall preliminary results show a 35 per cent increase in combined university and college applications at schools that took part in the program (i.e., subject schools) compared previous year's applications.

Deanne Fisher (OCAD University)

Pathways and Barriers to Undergraduate Education: The Case of Art and Design Programs

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ABSTRACT: OCAD University undertook an investigation of the transition needs and experiences of current OCAD U students from two distinct types of educational backgrounds: those with previous undergraduate coursework and those with prior college experience. The study used a mixed method approach, both qualitative (analysis of semi-structured interviews with students from both cohorts) and quantitative (analysis of National Survey of Student Engagement data comparing college transfer students, university transfer students and students who came directly from high school). Results pointed to some significant differences in the expectations, experiences and needs of students from different educational backgrounds leading to a series of recommendations to better facilitate student mobility and enhance the quality of experience. While focused in one institutional environment, many of the findings can be generalized to fine and applied art and student mobility within studio-based programs. The study was funded by the College-University Consortium Council as part of the call for proposals for research into aspects of postsecondary student mobility

Daniel Lang (University of Toronto)

Deciding to Transfer: A Study of College to University Choice

ABSTRACT: The study investigates the process of “transfer choice” occurring among college students. It asks how, when, and why students form a plan and make a decision to transfer. The study was undertaken at five colleges in Ontario: a “concurrent campus” college,” a “university center” college,” a “traditional community college,” a college with a large number of articulation agreements with universities, and a college in a location where there is no nearby university. The inclusion of the last category of college is important to introduce geography as a factor in students’ choices. The study tracked a single cohort of approximately 125 students (25 at each participating college) over a three-year period, September 2009 to September 2012. The findings of the study inform a number of policy decisions including the most and least effective forms of *inter* and *intra* institutional articulation and cooperation, the timing and format of student counselling, the advisability of transfer before or after completion of college studies, and the differential effects of different categories of college and forms of “pathway” (e.g., “university centres” in contrast to “traditional” colleges).

11:20-11:40

Break

11:40-1:00

Panel 2: Institutional Diversity and Differentiation in Ontario Higher Education

Chair: Sharon Li (University of Toronto)

Michael L. Skolnik (University of Toronto)

An Historical Perspective on the Idea of Institutional Diversity and Differentiation in Ontario Higher Education

ABSTRACT: Institutional differentiation has frequently been an object of interest in higher education policymaking in Ontario. This presentation will describe how the particular dimension of differentiation that has been the focus of interest has varied over time: for example, from religious affiliation in the nineteenth century, to credentials awarded and range of programs offered in the last third of the twentieth century, and more recently to the balance of effort between teaching and research. It will be suggested that the predominant theme in regard to policymaking for institutional differentiation has been the tension between reaping the alleged efficiency and productivity benefits of greater differentiation on the one hand, and on the other, addressing the

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concerns about geographic accessibility and equity among different regions and communities that would arise in a highly differentiated system.

Kevin Ramdas (Humber College)

An Examination of Institutional Change at two Ontario Colleges: 2002-2012

ABSTRACT: In 2000 and 2002, the Ontario government introduced two pieces of legislation that directly impacted the Ontario College sector. The first piece provided an avenue for colleges to offer 4-year baccalaureate programs. The second piece changed the governance structure of the colleges allowing them to approve programs, and expand the activities available to the college to complete their mission. This discussion will explore preliminary findings on how the newly legislated provisions have affected two Ontario Colleges in the following decade. Institutional theory is used as the framework to analyze change at each college. Institutional environments comprise of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements. These elements can be packaged into institutional logics, institutional actors, and governance structure; each is examined over time to observe changes in composition.

Pierre Piché (University of Toronto)

Measuring Diversity in Ontario's University Sector: 1994 – 2010

ABSTRACT: This presentation will review the preliminary results of a study which quantitatively measured and determined the extent of diversity in Ontario's university sector in 1994 and 2010 using hierarchical cluster analysis. It also quantitatively measured and determined the change in systemic diversity (differences in institutional size and type) and climate diversity (differences in campus environment and culture) during the same period by adapting Birnbaum's (1983) diversity matrix methodology to categorize institutions into unique institutional types and determined their concentration and dispersion by type as a means of assessing diversity. Simpson's λ was also used as another measure of systemic and climate diversity. The hierarchical cluster analysis suggested that there has been very little change in diversity between 1994 and 2010. However, by adapting Birnbaum's (1983) diversity matrix methodology to Ontario's university sector, the study determined there appears to have been a decrease in systemic and climate diversity during the period under investigation.

1:00-1:40

Lunch – onsite in library

1:40 – 3:00

Panel 3: Learning Outcomes: Enhancing Quality in Post-Secondary Education

Chair: Liwana Bringelson (Senior Policy Advisor, Postsecondary Education Transformation Branch, MTCU)

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Mary Catharine Lennon (HEQCO)

Supporting Higher Education Learning Outcomes.

ABSTRACT: HEQCO has been engaged with the development and assessment of higher education learning outcomes since 2011. This presentation will review the key activities undertaken including participation in an international assessment of civil engineering (AHELO), piloting a test of generic skills (CLA), developing sector specific learning outcomes (Tuning), and supporting institutions in implementing learning outcomes through a consortium.

Kirsten Madsen (Sheridan)

Tuning Project: Identifying and Measuring Sector-Based Learning Outcomes

ABSTRACT: Groups of Ontario college and university faculty members, employers and students have established clear statements of what students should know and be able to do at the completion of a credential; and present options of how to implement and assesses these common learning outcomes. The work of the groups (academic sectors of social science, life and health science, and physical science), is nearly complete and it is expected to be a valuable contribution for government, institutions, programs, faculty members, employers and students.

Brian Frank (Queens)

Engaging learning outcomes across a Discipline and in Institutions

Canadian engineering programs are in the process of developing processes to continuously evaluate and improve program delivery based on evidence of student performance relative to explicit learning outcomes. This requirement is being phased in by the accreditation body, which is, in collaboration with the deans of engineering, is sponsoring a group of engineering educators and educational developers to develop training and resources for programs. This group is known as the Engineering Graduate Attribute Development (EGAD) Project. This will describe the activities happening across Canada and the training and resources provided by EGAD. HEQCO is sponsoring a consortium of institutions engaged in a multi-year project to develop effective means of assessing the attainment of generic learning skills and to implement these assessment devices in their institutions. Three colleges and three universities are part of this consortium, working on activities including developing rubrics, using standardized instruments, and evaluating software to support the process.

3:00-3:30 **Moving Towards an Ontario Higher Education Research Network**

Lucia Padure (MTCU); Richard Wiggers (HEQCO); Glen Jones (University of Toronto)

This event is sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario; and the Higher Education Group, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

Organizing Committee: Glen Jones (University of Toronto), Lucia Padure (MTCU), Richard Wiggers (HECQO).

Please visit <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/hec/> for more information or watch live on May 16.