



STUDENT PRIORITIES FOR CREDIT TRANSFER

STUDENT PATHWAYS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION CONFERENCE

April 2016

Student Priorities *for credit transfer*



WHO WE ARE

Student Priorities *for credit transfer*



ONTARIO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ALLIANCE

- Student-governed advocacy & research organization that develops public policy recommendations to improve **affordability, accessibility, accountability, and quality**
- 20 standalone policies: from financial aid, to student employment, to mobility and credit transfer
- Our policies are student driven priorities – students identify the issues, collaborate with researchers, provide feedback, and ratify our principles, concerns, and recommendations



Brock

Laurentian

McMaster

Queen's

Trent

Durham

Waterloo

Western

Wilfrid

Laurier



MSU



~150,000 students

8 member associations

OUSA's Involvement with Credit Transfer

- OUSA maintains a close working relationship with ONCAT
- A member of our SC committee is a student representative on ONCAT's board
- Co-chair the Student Advisory Committee

OUSA's Involvement with Credit Transfer

- On the books
 - Mobility and Credit Transfer Pathways (2014)
 - Online Learning (2016)
 - As well as a passing mention in a few others

The OUSA Perspective

Mobility is a priority for the sector. It has implications for...

- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Student experience

Student Priorities *for credit transfer*



WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY

Why students transfer

- OUSA conducts an online survey of its membership every two years
- Ontario Post-Secondary Student Survey
- 8,000-10,000 respondents
- Topics on a wide range of issues, including transfer

Why students transfer

In 2013, we heard that students transfer for varied reasons:

- To change programs
- To access courses not offered otherwise
- For financial reasons
- For personal reasons

Student Priorities

for credit transfer

“Which of the following best describes your experience with transferring credits?”

Supplementing program from elsewhere	34%
Transferring credits that I earned on exchange	16%
Transferring to another institution entirely	50%

N=1,016

“Was the transfer part of a bridging program or pathway?”

Yes	18%
No	82%

N=501

Student Priorities *for credit transfer*

“Of the credits that you tried to transfer, how many were recognized by the new institution?”

None or nearly none	6%
About 20%	20%
About 40%	13%
About 60%	6%
About 80%	8%
All or nearly all	48%

N=1,025

Student Priorities

for credit transfer

“Why did you decide to transfer to a different institution?”

To upgrade my credential	31%
To be closer to home or family	22%
For a program not available without transferring	20%
For a program I thought would be better elsewhere	18%
For a different campus culture	19%
To live in a different city	16%
To alleviate financial strain	11%
To move for medical reasons	4%
For a specific scholarship	2%

N ~ 504 (institution-to-institution transfer students)

Overall Principles for Credit Transfer and Mobility

Transparency

Support

Consistency

Transparency

- Ongoing support for transfer portals
- Rationale for credit transfer decisions
- Early notice of credit transfer decisions
- Formal and accessible appeals processes
- Common terminology

Student Priorities *for credit transfer*

Support

- Simplification and removal of fees
- Transfer advisors
- Orientation programming for transfer students
- Financial aid for bridging programs

Consistency

- Universal recognition of first and second year courses
- Elimination of additional grade requirements
- Expansion of low-cost PLAR practices
- Database of course descriptions/syllabi

The Online Element

In many respects, online learning and credit transfer will be closely linked, from the student perspective

Students who wish to complement their learning may either take a course nearby, or online

eCampus Ontario and ONCAT should share resources, databases, and avoid duplicating the same information for students

Student Priorities *for credit transfer*



Moving forward...

OUSA will continue to advocate for transferability and mobility in the system

Will push for stable and ongoing funding for organizations championing these issues

Will continue to be a platform for the student voice, conduct research into the thoughts and experiences of our students.

What would you like to hear from them? What gaps in your own knowledge?

Student Priorities *for credit transfer*



Thank you!

www.ousa.ca

Twitter: @ousa

Contact: Zachary Rose, Executive Director
zachary@ousa.ca