



College-University Transfer: Ideas, Implications and a Few Insights

Fiona Deller



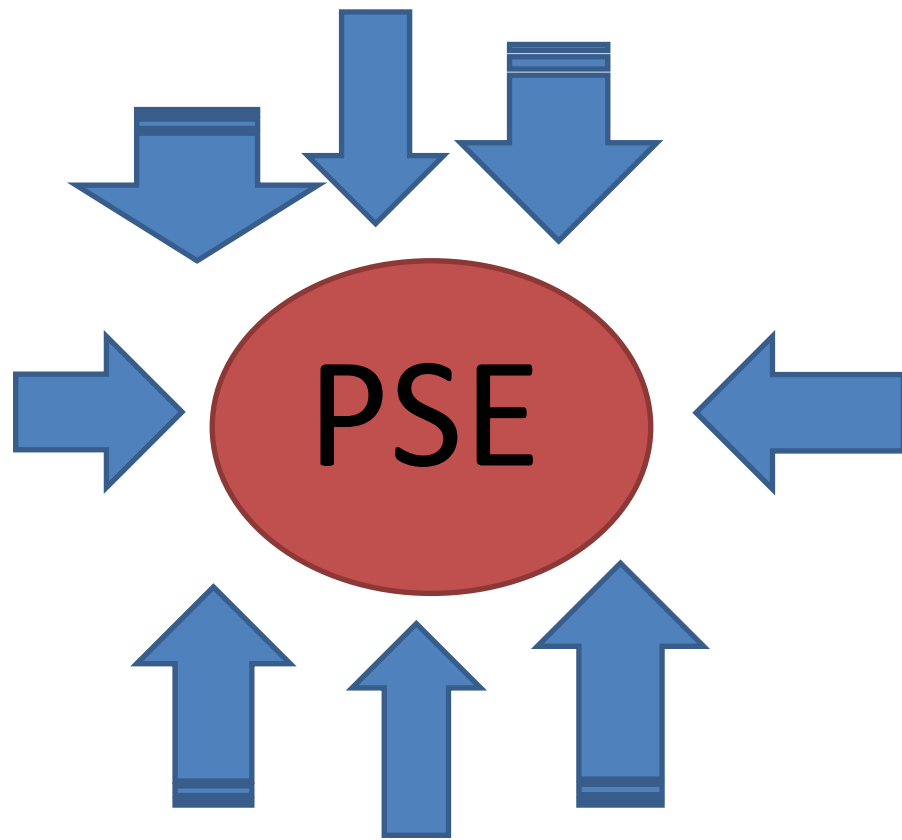
Overview

- Setting the Scene: Ontario
- Other jurisdictions studied
- Program Design Ideas
- Government Policy ideas
- Implications for students
- A few final insights

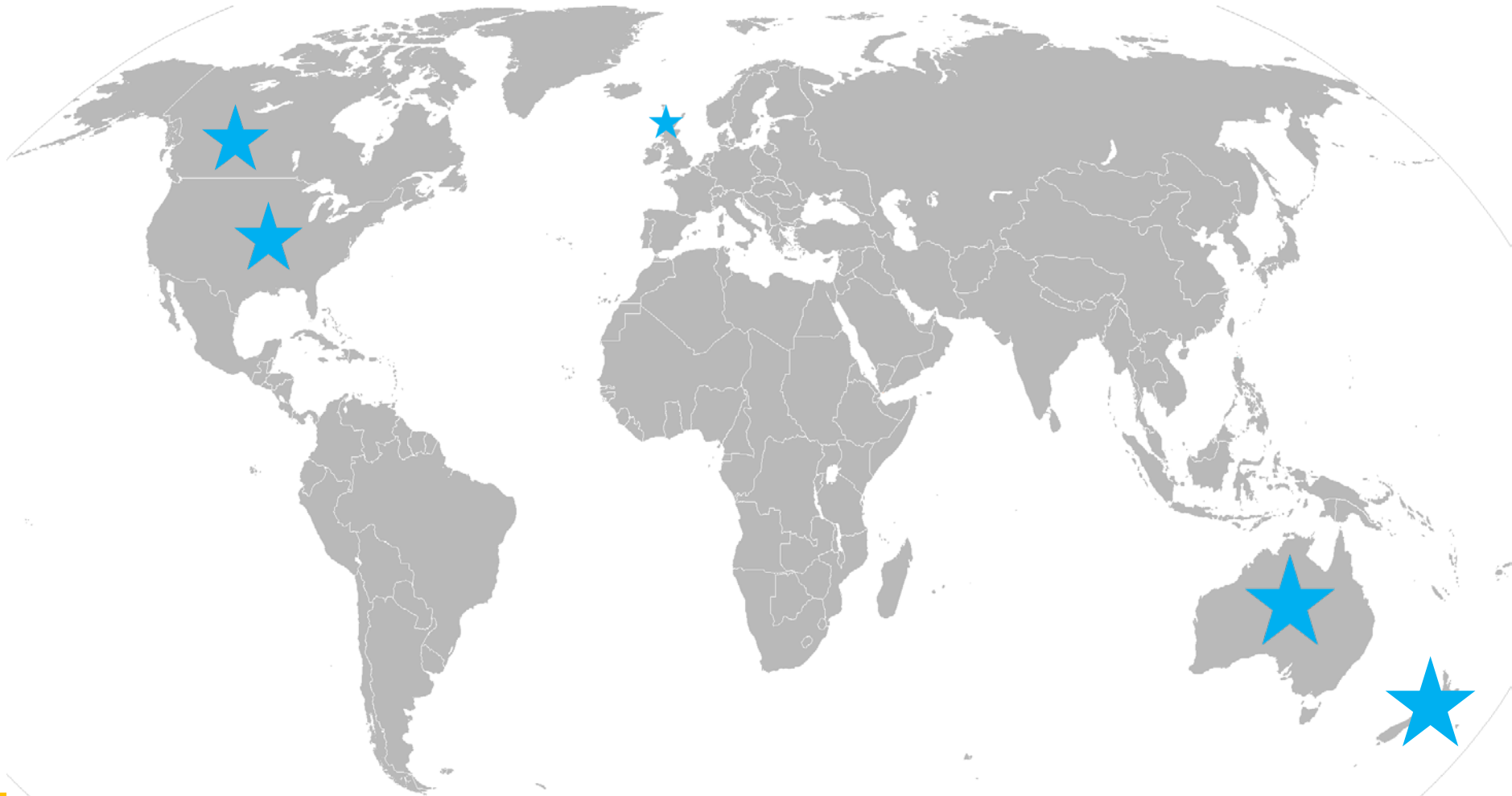
Setting the Scene: Ontario today

- **1960s** development of college system, no transfer process was developed.
- Transfer arrangements with universities that granted credit for college courses were rare until the **1980s**;
- CUCC founded in **1996**, partially as a response to the possibility of colleges being able to grant degrees;
- **1996-2011** development of most of the bilateral and multilateral agreements that exist today – driven by labour market demands, and government incentives.
- However, transfer arrangements and college degree granting remains the decision and policy arena of individual institutions with no real system planning or vision.

Pressures, possibilities & pathways



Jurisdictions studied...



...North American close up




Caveats and considerations

- System evolution:
 - Jurisdictions with systems with a transfer system from the beginning (Cal, Florida, Washington, Colorado);
 - Jurisdictions that introduced transfer systems into traditionally binary systems (Scotland, Ohio);
 - Jurisdictions that introduced college degree granting into well established transfer systems (BC, AB, Florida, Washington)
- Comparisons difficult due to size of systems, and terminology

PROGRAM DESIGN

Common Elements

- Most usual disciplines: arts and science, and business, programs (occasionally social sciences).
- Designed for university transfer, rather than workforce entry.
- Most common: 1st 2 years of university, provided by a college,  to a university degree in the same field.
- Curriculum agreed upon by faculty from both colleges & universities.

Some Common Practices

- 2 year associate degrees or the equivalent;

AND/OR

- A common set of educational courses, usually about one and a half years of full time study;

AND/OR

- A common pre-major block in specific disciplines.

2 year block transfers

- Courses designed to transfer;
- Courses are integrated into a coherent program;
- The design of these programs is fully shared between the universities and colleges;
- There is an authoritative body to represent the colleges and universities in this process;

Individual transfers

- A common numbering system, assists registrars in identifying transferable or compatible courses;
- Transfer guides for students;
- In one case (Florida) an integrated transfer information system with the common student data system.

GOVERNMENT POLICY IDEAS

Common Practices and Considerations

- System wide policies that include criteria or protocols to determine which credits are transferable.
- Policy context is important.
- Attention to institutional engagement and buy in the transfer implementation process.

A Few Approaches

- Restricted seats approach: number of funded university spaces restricted in order to encourage transfer
- Accountability arrangements approach: funding to institutions in return for increasing number of transfer students beyond base.
- Financial penalty approach: courses repeated unnecessarily, not funded.

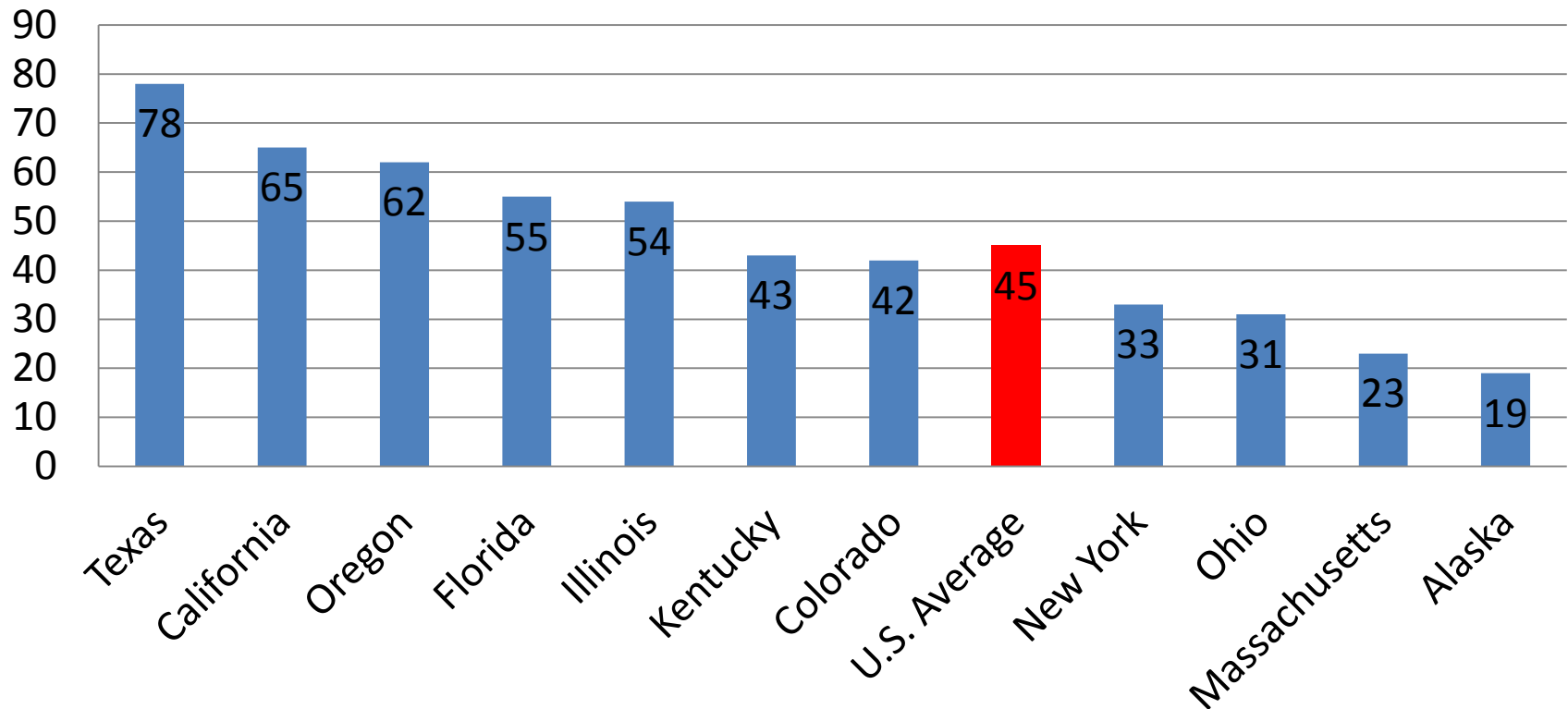
Findings from the Literature:

- Differing opinions about whether or not government policy on transfer effective or necessary;
- Mandatory transfer policies may have less effect on transfer than other factors;
- Mandatory transfer policies most effective in smoothing pathways, but has less effective in encouraging or increasing transfers.
- Overall, states with legislated transfer policies do not have higher transfer rates that states without.

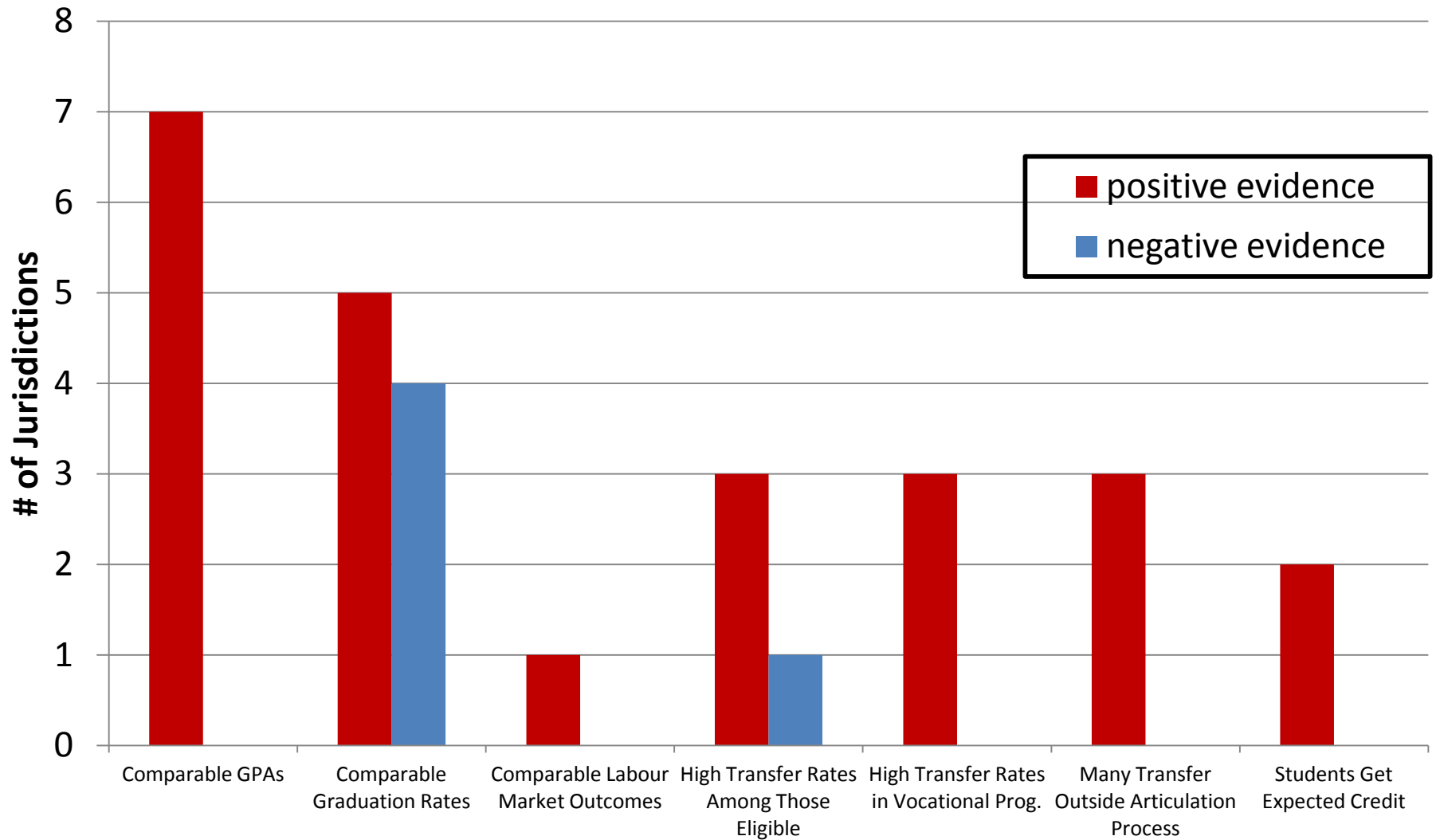
IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS

On average, 45% of American students that complete a university degree have some previous college experience

Percentage of Students, 2010/2011



Academic outcomes within selected jurisdictions



Certainty for students (a few examples)

- **Florida** guarantee: students who earn an associate degree in arts will receive an offer from a public university;
- **California** policy: gives preference to transfer students over direct entry students in admissions.
- **Florida & Kentucky** mandate that universities give priority to transfer students over out of state applicants;

A few final insights

- Block transfers, university/college collaboration, designed curriculum specific for university transfer;
- Academic programs most common;
- Overall system design;
- Data gaps – its time for an OEN!

Thank you!

Fiona Deller
Executive Director, Policy and Partnerships
Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario
fdeller@heqco.ca