



2018/19 annual report



oncat
Ontario Council on
Articulation and Transfer



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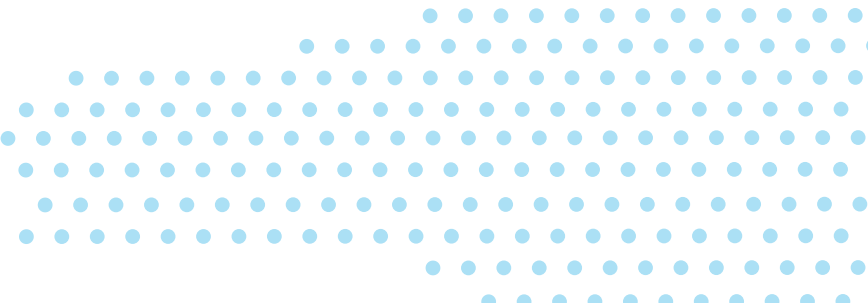
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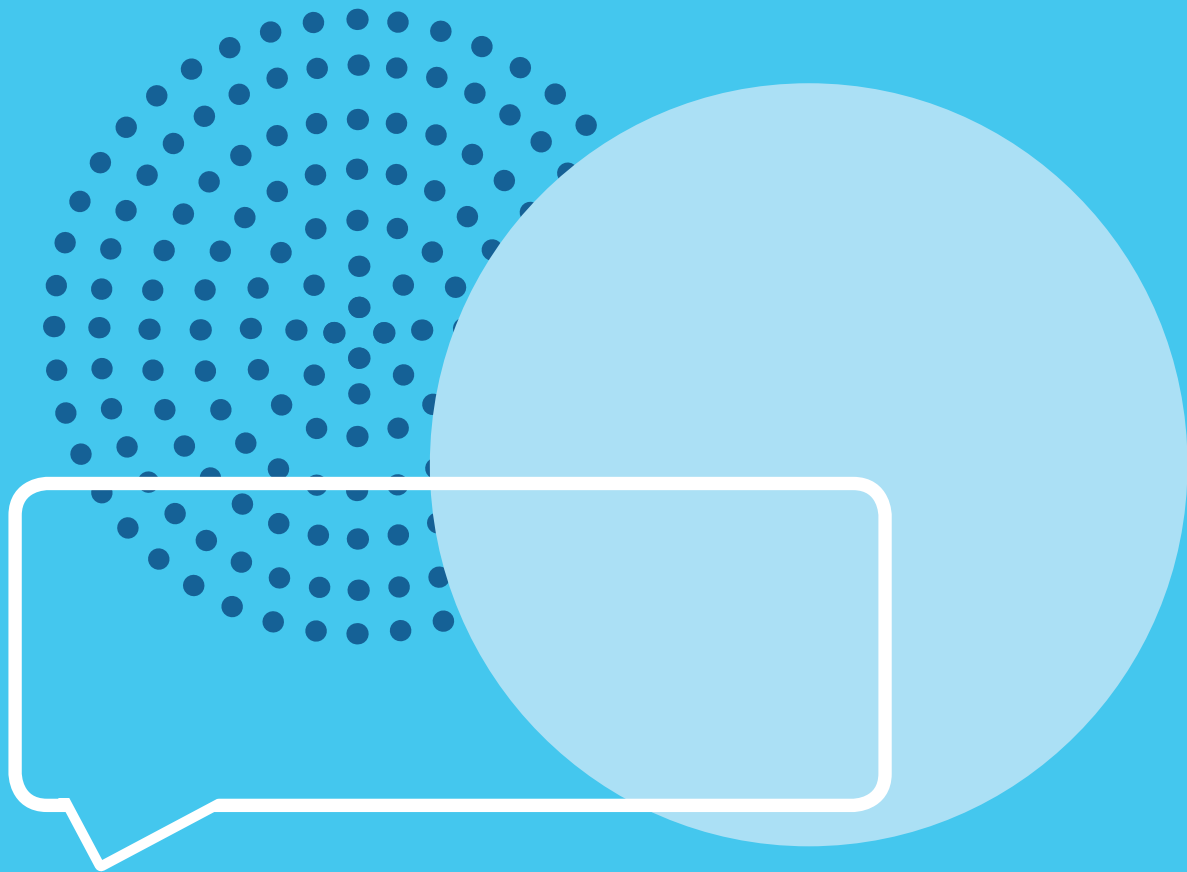
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Message from the Board Co-Chairs

As leaders of postsecondary institutions, we know firsthand that the journey of a student has evolved. More and more students today view different types of education as important to their success in the workplace. They are keen to equip themselves with a diverse range of skills, both theoretical and experiential, as a way to cater to their own interests and aptitudes. No longer is seeking only a diploma or a degree the norm. More and more students, in fact over 60,000 students in Ontario, have navigated from one postsecondary institution to another (be it a college to a college, a university to a university, a college to a university, a university to a college), as a means of achieving this goal.

What is special about ONCAT is that it's uniquely positioned to help students pursue such an education – one that is both flexible and also adaptable to their needs, while also meeting employer and economic demands. Throughout the years, ONCAT has built the credibility, and the capacity, to bring together a large collective of stakeholders, including institutions, students, guidance counsellors, and government to name a few, to continue to spearhead positive change in the credit transfer landscape. In the same vein, the onus is on the sector to ensure that Ontarians receive the best possible value from government investments made in postsecondary education.

There is no doubt that ONCAT as an organization, and

its hard work, continues to gain traction, especially as credit transfer becomes more common for both students and institutions. One need only refer to the Strategic Mandate Agreements released by each institution to get a sense of the importance of credit transfer. Many Agreements feature credit transfer and a commitment to collaboration with other institutions in the development of agreements and pathways for the benefit of students.

While the ONCAT secretariat continues its work with the sector on many of its current activities, as outlined in this report, our Board recently held a retreat in May, to develop suggestions for additional initiatives that would help re-envision the culture of student mobility in Ontario. Given the importance of credit transfer, we're excited about the next phase of our operations.

On behalf of the Board, we wish to express our gratitude to the provincial government for their continued investment in credit transfer and student mobility. We would like to thank Yvette Munro, ONCAT's Executive Director, as well as the secretariat, for their leadership and dedication in helping to facilitate change among the postsecondary sector. And lastly, we would like to extend our appreciation to our colleagues at Ontario's colleges within universities for their continued commitment in putting the needs of students first.

Together, we are shaping the future of credit transfer in Ontario.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Jensen

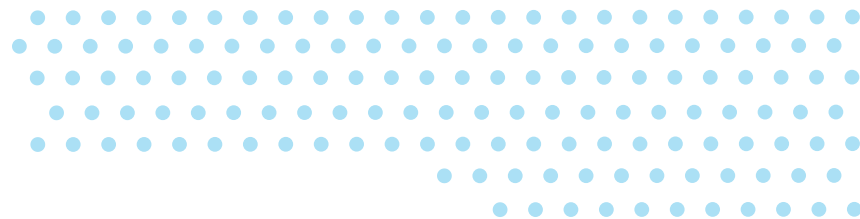
President & CEO,
Algonquin College



Deborah MacLatchy

President & Vice-Chancellor,
Wilfrid Laurier University

Message from the Executive Director



The summer is here, and it's a time when campuses are bustling with excitement as students are taking part in convocations across the province, to celebrate the culmination of years of hard work, bidding farewell to their academic lives and thinking about their next chapter. I share in the excitement of those students, as I reflect on the year as ONCAT's new Executive Director, and imagine what's possible as we begin another chapter of the organization.

Over this past year, I have connected with colleagues, engaged with leaders, and met with our government partners, to better understand the credit transfer landscape here in Ontario. Whether the conversation has been with a college, university, or Indigenous institute, I have heard a

great deal of similar messages. It's clear that our partners see value in the creation and work of ONCAT, especially in helping to build collaboration across a system that had very little previous experience sitting at the same table. I have heard some really positive feedback from our partners, who acknowledge the support of ONCAT in helping to build new and innovative transfer pathways.

It's also obvious that throughout the year, ONCAT, and its members, have built a solid foundation. But as with any good book, there are always more chapters to write, and more work to be done in order to achieve an integrated and efficient transfer system in Ontario. We see this as a shared responsibility that requires all of us to continue to work differently and place, at the heart of what we do, the needs of our students.

We encourage institutions to move away from working in siloes both internally and externally. It's apparent, often in the transfer data we are able to gather, that when institutions engage institutional research, faculty/academic administrators, registrars, and student services professionals in their transfer planning, they are able to achieve better results for their students and their institution. The same can be said for when institutions make strategic decisions about the use of their Credit Transfer Institutional Grant from MTCU and their work with ONCAT.

Similarly, we are seeing some great work happening in regions across Ontario where colleges, universities, and Indigenous institutes have come together to develop pathways that meet the local learning and employment needs of their region.

For ONCAT, we are hearing from our partners that they need more from us as well. In order to ensure that prospective transfer students or those supporting student pathway planning have the information they need to make informed decisions, we need to rethink the look and capabilities of ONTransfer.ca. It's time to prepare for Version 2.0 and we have started that process by gathering feedback from students and our institutional partners. Our approach to

project funding and research will continue to evolve in order to ensure projects align strongly with institutional needs, ONCAT priorities, and system transformation. We also don't want all the important work that is happening, either within projects or among our Faculty Fellows, to go unnoticed and we have great plans for sharing learning and mobilizing knowledge across the sector. In fact, in the coming weeks, we are hosting a series of webinars and we hope that you will participate in the webinars, as this is a great opportunity to hear about the great work of our partners.

I would like to extend our deep appreciation to all of our colleagues in Ontario's colleges and universities, our newer colleagues at our Indigenous institutes, the many students and student groups, and the many other friends of ONCAT for their commitment and dedication to credit transfer. These individuals have worked tirelessly to find innovative ways to promote student success and for that we are grateful. I also want to acknowledge the Government of Ontario, both the new Government and Ministry staff with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) who continue to have faith in the work of ONCAT and provide the necessary funding support both to ONCAT and to colleges and universities to advance transfer across the province.

I would like to acknowledge all of our Board of Directors, including our co-chairs Cheryl Jensen, President and CEO of Algonquin College, and Deborah MacLatchy, President and Vice-Chancellor of Laurier University, for their continued leadership and guidance.

And finally, I would like to thank the ONCAT team for their drive, determination, and hard work. This team has been instrumental in developing the infrastructure needed to build a comprehensive and transparent credit transfer system.

From all of us here at ONCAT, thank you for your support as we continue to build an efficient and effective credit transfer system for students.

Sincerely,



A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yvette Munro'.

Yvette Munro

Executive Director

Why Mobility Matters

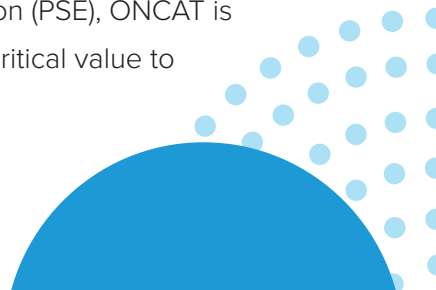
Who We Are

Founded by the provincial government in 2011, the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) was created to develop a system of mobility for students by building academic pathways and course equivalencies through its network of Ontario's 45 publicly-assisted colleges, universities, and Indigenous institutes. Alongside our members and stakeholders, we do this by:

- Supporting projects aimed at creating and expanding credit transfer pathways and improving our understanding of student mobility and the student transfer experience;
- Engaging Ontario's regions and communities through facilitated groups;

- Collecting credit transfer data and sharing resources;
- Hosting events that brings together credit transfer experts from across the province; and,
- Connecting students to transfer opportunities through ONTransfer.ca.

ONCAT's activities are part of the Ontario government's commitment to the development of an integrated education system that maximizes opportunities for student success. Collaboration is at the root of these efforts, and as one of the few organizations in Ontario that brings together all actors in postsecondary education (PSE), ONCAT is uniquely poised to help deliver critical value to the entire sector.



Our Members

All 45 of Ontario's public colleges and universities:



Strategic Priorities

Students will experience ease of mobility among publicly assisted PSE institutions

- Students will experience **reduced barriers** when transferring, which will help them to graduate.
- There will be increased and **improved collaboration** among the sector (colleges, universities, Indigenous institutes) regarding transfer opportunities and articulation.
- Stakeholders will have **improved awareness** and knowledge of transfer opportunities, outcomes, and progress.



How our work impacts students



**TRANSFER
STUDENT
JOURNEY**



**STUDENT
CONSIDERS A
CHANGE**



**LEARNS
ABOUT
TRANSFER**



**SEARCHES,
COMPARES &
DECIDES**



**APPLIES &
RECEIVES
CREDIT(S)**



**STARTS NEW
ACADEMIC
PROGRAM**



OUTREACH



Promotions

ONTransfer.ca, General & High School Brochures, Fairs

Sector Conferences, ONTransfer.ca Day



PROJECTS

Research

Innovative Transfer

Pathway Development



GROUPS

Advisory Boards: Francophone & Bilingual, Northern, Students

Faculty Fellows, Transfer Advisors Group (TAG)

Discipline-Based Transfer, Learning Outcomes

A close-up photograph of a person's hands working on a laptop. The person is holding a smartphone in their left hand and typing on the laptop keyboard with their right hand. A disposable coffee cup is visible in the background. A large blue circle with a white border is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text "Students First".

Students First

Who is a transfer student?

A transfer student is someone who has completed a course, some courses, or an entire program at one institution and wants to continue their postsecondary education at another.

Why transfer?



Wish to switch
programs



Current school
isn't the right fit



Personal
circumstances



Seeking
additional studies

EACH YEAR
60,000+
STUDENTS TRANSFER

Every direction of
transfer counts:

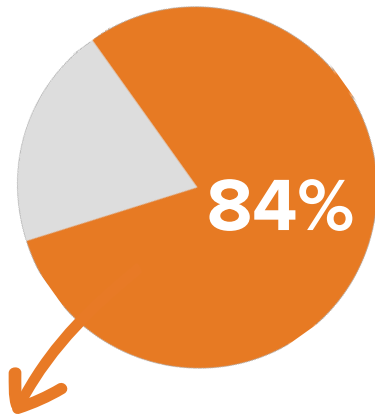


What is ONTransfer.ca?



ONTransfer.ca caters to those students thinking about their postsecondary journey.

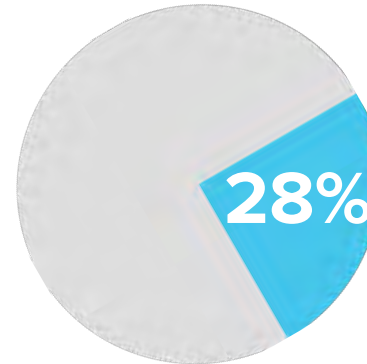
It's a free website managed by ONCAT, where students interested in mobility can see which courses and programs will transfer. The website has information from our membership, consisting of all of Ontario's 45 public college, universities, and Indigenous institutes.



**of diploma
graduates** have
a pathway into
a **degree**

*beyond just broad-based
admissions policies*

66% of which have a pathway into a
degree in a **similar** discipline



**of University
Courses** can be
recognized in an
equivalency upon

1,400,000+ ANNUAL PAGE-VIEWS

Host to:

- **Program Transfer Guide** which has 1,900+ block agreements, leading to **800,000+ individual transfer opportunities**
- **Course Transfer Guide** which has **240,000+ course equivalencies**

Helping:



High school students looking to combine college & university studies to tailor their education



College or university students thinking of changing schools



Students who have finished a college or university program & want to further their studies.

SXD LAB - STUDENT MOBILITY PROJECT

In partnership with eCampus Ontario, a student-led SXD Lab project was completed on student mobility in March 2019. A total of 23 students participated in journey mapping their experiences with the transfer system. The project provided important insights into students' experiences, including key pain points that are helping to direct our ONTransfer.ca redevelopment. Some things students said they would like to see:

- Increased access to **transfer advisors**
- **Credit assessments** prior to, or with offers of admission
- Step-by-step **online guide** and application tracker
- **Wrap-around supports** (e.g. housing, orientation)
- Consistent and **clear deadlines** and requirements
- **System-wide integration** (e.g. transfer applications through OUAC/OCAS, inter-institutional sharing of transcripts)

Read the full report at sxdlab.ecampusontario.ca/projects/student-mobility

Outreach & Events



Resources

ONCAT's communications and outreach play an integral role in informing students and stakeholders of the transfer opportunities available to them.

We provide resource materials, in the form of three brochures targeted to the postsecondary student, high school, and sector audiences. The sector brochure is a new addition to our roster of resources. With ONCAT constantly engaging with our stakeholders through outreach, events, projects, and convening groups, it can be difficult to articulate all the ways in which these practices contribute directly and indirectly to transfer students' experiences. As such we designed a clear 'General ONCAT' brochure, building on the highly-successful student transfer brochure. This new brochure synthesizes ONCAT's work into an easy-to-comprehend document.

All our resources are free to view and order on the ONCAT website.

Platforms for Collaboration

The seventh anniversary of the ONCAT Student Pathways in Higher Education Conference took place on April 16 to 17, 2018, at the Marriott Hotel in downtown Toronto. The conference provided over 300 participants the opportunity to share best practices in developing Ontario's credit transfer system, as well as to hear from, and build partnerships with, credit transfer professionals from across the province and beyond. The four streams (Mobility Models, New Frontiers, Data Driven, and Creating Connections) mirrored our project pillars of pathway development, innovative transfer, and research, with the fourth stream providing further opportunities for relationship building and deeper-dive conversations. The complete agenda and proceedings of the conference are available on the ONCAT website.

February 2019 marked ONCAT's 5th ONTransfer.ca Day, bringing administrators from 45 colleges and universities across the province to Toronto to discuss the technical

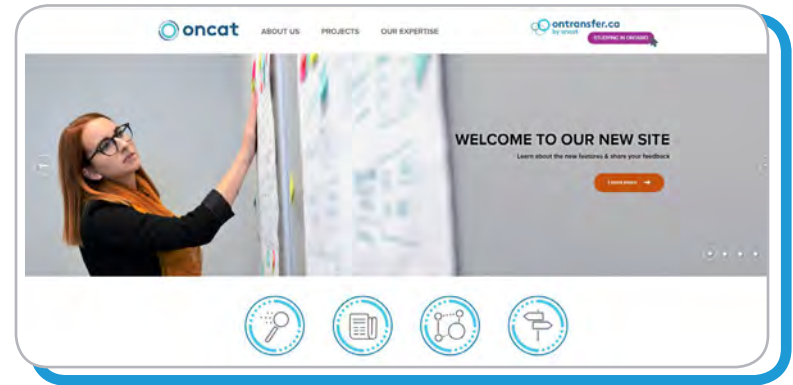
aspects of credit transfer, and share tools and resources. The theme of the day was 'The Art and Science of Credit Transfer', which explored promising practices, operational successes, and the art of advising transfer students. Key discussions from the event included the transition to electronic, automatic assessment, navigating administrative and governance processes, and, improving the student experience through outbound and inbound advising and upfront transfer credit eligibility offering.

ONCAT Website

In 2017, we set out to redevelop our oncat.ca website to better serve our stakeholders. The redesign was driven by student and partner focus group feedback, a review of best practices, and an analysis of current website use and needs through user stories.

Launched in January 2019, the updated site enables a more dynamic, functional and responsive interface that is mobile-friendly; promotes and makes available searchable content, including project reports; and better communicates

the differences between ONCAT.ca and ONTransfer.ca. This marks a significant milestone for ONCAT. The new platform positions us well for continued growth as a resource and leader in credit transfer and student mobility for Ontario's postsecondary sector.



TRANSFER AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

ONCAT presented the inaugural Transfer Awards of Excellence at the 2019 ONTransfer.ca Day event in Toronto. The awards honoured members of the college and university community for their outstanding contributions to building a culture of transfer and mobility within Ontario's postsecondary sector. Awards were presented by Executive Director, Yvette Munro, in three categories, to the following recipients:



Staff Champion
Mat Brown

Admissions Officer in Transfer
University of Waterloo



**Research Excellence Centre for
Research in Student Mobility (CRSM)**

Seneca College



Leadership
Dr. Henry Decock

Associate Vice-President,
Academic Partnerships
Seneca College




Projects

Our Approach

Having dependable information and collaborating to improve new and existing pathways is fundamental to making student mobility more efficient and accessible across Ontario. Through our annual Request for Proposal (RFPs), ONCAT funds projects that reduce barriers and open doors for students throughout their academic journeys.

We provide funding through three granting streams:

- Innovative Transfer: to help catalyze change in Ontario's transfer system by supporting partners to experiment in improving the effectiveness of pathways, creating new unconventional pathways, developing tools for greater system-wide collaboration, and taking action on recommendations from previous ONCAT research.



- **Pathway Development:** to create formalized transfer pathways where they may not currently exist, but where there is clear interest and need expressed by students, and to increase transfer pathways for underrepresented students.
- **Research:** to generate knowledge that can directly inform policies, pathways, and institutional practices related to student mobility and transfer in Ontario.

Completed Projects

In addition to awarding funding for new projects, in 2018-19 approximately 35 projects concluded, with final reports submitted outlining key project insights and learnings which will soon be accessible on the ONCAT website.

New Projects

In addition to completed projects, in March 2019 ONCAT funded 26 new projects, five of which will be led by Indigenous institutes, ten by colleges, and eleven by universities. See a full listing of the projects at: oncat.ca/en/ProjectFunding2019. The projects will explore the areas of:

Regional Transfer

- Pathways between postsecondary institutions in the Ottawa region
- Exploring Northern employer perspectives on multi-credentialed workers and regional pathway development opportunities

Economic Outcomes

- Labour market and schooling outcomes of transfer students compared with non-transfer students in Ontario

Equitable Transfer Pathways

- Pathway projects for, and research into barriers faced by, students at Indigenous institutes transferring to other postsecondary institutions in Ontario
- Research focused on the experiences of Black transfer students transitioning from university to college
- Pathways to ensure Francophone students have opportunities across the province to further their education in French

Tools & Tech

- Continued development of an online transfer credit assessment tool

2019 Projects Funded by Stream





Groups

Faculty Fellows

Faculty play an essential role in the student experience of transfer. In 2018-19 ONCAT funded six Faculty

Fellows, from three colleges and three universities, in three main areas:

- Increasing institutional knowledge about transfer-related data and transfer student experience in their faculty/department/institution;
- Improving academic processes related to evaluating transfer credits and working with transfer students; and,
- Sharing emerging models of successful student mobility initiatives.

Faculty Fellows engage in a number of activities, including working collaboratively with administrators, academic colleagues, and student groups to improve transfer processes; exploring innovative approaches to

academic governance or curriculum development as it relates to transfer; and developing tools/resources that support faculty roles in the transfer process.

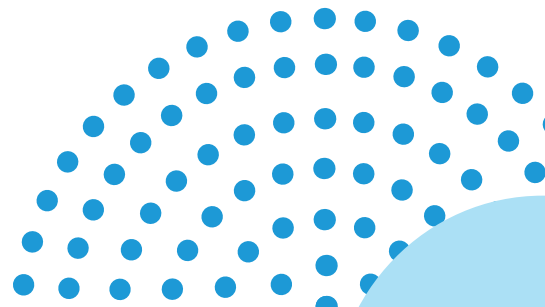
Francophone and Bilingual Steering Committee

Committee members work together to promote an exchange of best practices between Francophone and bilingual institutions, to target and reduce barriers to Francophone student mobility, and to recommend new articulation/pathway models between institutions and other francophone or bilingual partners. Members include Collège Boréal, Collège Universitaire Dominicain, Collège Universitaire Glendon, La Cité collégiale, Université de Hearst, Université Laurentienne, Université d'Ottawa, Université Saint Paul, Université de Sudbury.



Learning Outcomes Steering Committee

A working group of member representatives who are developing a better understanding of the role of learning outcomes in the credit transfer process and how they can improve existing and future pathways. As part of this work, ONCAT's multi-year The Learning Outcomes for Transfer Publication Project aims to assess critically the theoretical and conceptual foundations, assumptions, and implications of using learning outcomes for the purposes of credit transfer and student mobility. An international, large-scale assessment of outcomes-based approaches has been conducted, from which preliminary implications and recommendations for the Ontario context have been composed.



Northern Institutions' Pathways Steering Committee (NOSC)

The Northern Institutions' Pathways Steering Committee (NOSC) supports the development and continuation of an integrated strategy to create student pathways and enhance institutional collaboration among Northern institutions in Ontario. All six colleges and four universities from the north are represented on the committee.

The group designs and implements various initiatives to support the intersection of PSE and employability in the North including supporting the development of a Northern Analysis Study looking at the labour market needs of the Northern population.

NOSC also serves as the catalyst and incubator of specific Northern-focused projects including:

- The Business Integrated Project – a co-registration initiative, this pathway will allow a student to graduate with a university degree in select disciplines while simultaneously earning a one-year college certificate in Business Fundamentals.
- Employer Skills Initiative – a pilot Needs Assessment for Service industry employers of the Nipissing/Parry Sound Region to identify credential requirements and additional management skills to support relevant programming and transfers across PSEs.
- The Transfer Advisor Research Project (TARP) – a deep dive audit into how each Northern institution 'does transfer' to identify any gaps in process or procedure



that can be adjusted to support student mobility going to and from institutions to maximize student attainment of credits.

Student Transfer Expert Panel (STEP)

STEP members are current students or recent graduates that have transferred at least once in their academic journey in Ontario. As representatives of the community ONCAT serves, STEP provides valuable feedback on ONCAT activities, including our websites, promotional materials, research, governance, and notably, in our most recent round of Project RFPs, served on our granting review committees.



Transfer Advisory Group (TAG)

Transfer advisors, at both sending and receiving institutions, are often times students' first official point of information when making decisions about transfer. TAG's role is to establish and support a community of transfer advisors across the province to address transfer issues that may impact students, through sharing promising practices/successes across institutions; building capacity among individual advisors and those working directly with students; and using data to inform effective practices.

In 2018-19 TAG formed two working groups, developed an onboarding document and FAQs for new advisors, identified transfer advisor mentors, and created an online hub to connect student transfer support staff across Ontario. Find these resources at oncat.ca/en/TAG.

Transfer Committees

Comprised of representatives from a specific discipline (English, History, Engineering, Game Education, Business, Community Services and Biology/Biotech), drawn from the colleges and universities that offer at least one credential in that field of study. They act as a platform for information sharing and discussion on student mobility in the discipline. Industry and accreditation bodies also participate in committees when relevant, such as within the Engineering Transfer Committee.





Board of Directors

Cheryl Jensen (Co-Chair)

President and CEO of Algonquin College

Deborah MacLatchy (Co-Chair)

President and Vice-Chancellor, Wilfrid Laurier University

Caitlin Smith

George Brown College, College Student Representative

Christine Bradaric-Baus

Vice-President Academic, Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, External Representative

Elaine Popp

Vice-President Academic, Durham College

Kathryn Kettle

University Student Representative

Lynn Casimiro

Vice-President Academic and Student Success, La Cité collégiale

Pierre Riopel

External Representative

Serge Demers

Interim Vice-President, Academic and Provost, Laurentian University

Susan McCahan

Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, University of Toronto

Ex Officio Members of the Board

David Fulford

Vice-President Research, Colleges Ontario

David Porter

Chief Executive Officer, eCampusOntario

Eva Busza

Vice-President, Policy and Sector Collaboration, Council of Ontario Universities

Heather Lane

Executive Director, Ontario Universities' Application Centre

Karen Creditor

Chief Executive Officer, Ontario College Application Service

Yvette Munro

Executive Director, ONCAT

ONCAT Team



Yvette Munro
Executive Director



Shauna Love
Operations Director



Lia Quickert
Strategic Communications
and Public Affairs Director



Rose Chan
ONTransfer.ca Manager



Melinda Cheng
Special Projects Assistant,
Data Projects



Sonia Chwalek
Communications and
Events Coordinator



Sarah Fuchs
Senior Policy Analyst



Natalie Isber
Operations Coordinator



Roger Pizarro Milian
Senior Researcher



Carolyn Poplak
Project Lead,
Collaborations and
Community Program



Ana Skinner
Project Lead, Grants
Program



Peter Ssekiziyivu
Finance Manager

2018/19 annual report

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